

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Tuesday, November 26, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
1st Floor, Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: On the date above, the *Board of Selectmen* held a meeting. The meeting was called to order by *Chairman Hoyt* at 4:06 p.m. Present were *Vice Chairman Bush*, *Members Duval*, and *Nowak*. Also present was *Town Administrator Green*. *Member Blanchard* was absent.

DPW DIRECTOR INTERVIEWS

ROBERT TOBER, 4:00 P.M.: *Chairman Hoyt* gave Candidate Tober an introduction to the Board Members and outlined the interview process. He was asked to give a brief background about himself and his interest in working for the Town of Adams. *Mr. Tober* provided his educational background as well as a desire to work with his hands. He noted his experience with the Town of Allston as the Public Facility Supervisor, and outlined his responsibilities for parks, highways, roads, landscape construction and the Tree Department. He noted his experience has expanded, and that he has worked with Selectmen and all municipal branches. He advised he started his own businesses in landscape and post frame design construction as he worked for a builder and learned it on his own. He referenced his property management work and noted similarities to Town facilities. He explained his hands-on approach with engineering, business and design theories. He noted his interest in Adams because of both the position and its location as he has been working in Boston for seven years and the commute has interested him in working in Western Massachusetts.

Have you read the job description? What in your education and professional history has prepared and qualified you for this position? *Mr. Tober* replied he had read the job description and has some theoretical training classes in AutoCAD and design but mostly hands-on experience. He noted his experience working for a builder as well as a municipality. He explained he worked for registered engineers not just designing, but using GIS and business systems. He explained that in his own business he designed, built, and landscaped jobs and projects which he feels transfers to the DPW Director position.

Entering into a new leadership position where you are under scrutiny by employees, many who have years of service, can be intimidating. There becomes an atmosphere of coziness and lax protocol which is not uncommon to those serving in municipal agencies. This is not intended to be a knock to our DPW employees, but a workplace reality in most Town and City municipalities. How would your leadership and management abilities be used to maximize the productivity and creativity of your workforce and how would you institute these changes if you deemed them necessary? *Mr. Tober* explained that he was hired as a leader ran into that same

situation, and his style of leadership and management is collaborative. He noted he sees teamwork as working with those in the team and interacting with them. He pointed out that he brings twenty years of experience and plans to be interacting with the staff doing hands on work, rolling up his sleeves and working with them. He explained that he would work with them to get them to take ownership of their work to use their skills for them to be their best and get input. He noted that the sky is the limit with creativity, as long as it is within the budget and infrastructure. With new projects the opportunity presents itself over and above the maintenance of the infrastructure with cultivating teamwork and creativity.

It is one of the goals of this Board to have a database of our streets, bridges, and culverts that helps us identify the items that have been completed, inspected, etc. What software programs can you use immediately at a high level of skill? Can you describe any GIS or database management experience you have? *Mr. Tober* advised that his experience relative to this comes from the Town of Holliston, where used ARC Town and ARC CAD. He explained that they moved telephone poles and gave him an outlay of maps, for which he had the insight to immediately utilize GIS. He noted he used Excel and downloaded databases but the GIS includes all the information in the package to get locations of things such as drainage structures, covers and clogs to know exactly where they are. He explained that historical work done on projects provides knowledge to work with, and he would use excel to export and extract information.

The DPW has a significant vehicle fleet and a responsibility of the Director is to coordinate proper use and maintenance of these resources with staff Mechanics. What is your level of familiarity and experience with equipment maintenance and operation? *Mr. Tober* explained that he has extensive experience as he has worked with and operated all kinds of equipment. He pointed out that he has his Hoisting License, operated lawnmowers, front end loaders and backhoes as well as having done maintenance on all of them. He noted that he has systems for preventative maintenance and tracks basic oil changes and maintenance of equipment. He stated he used software for work orders and other programs in addition to the hands on and theoretical understanding and has used and maintained himself.

How would you individually rate your interpersonal, communication and complaint resolution skills? *Mr. Tober* rated his interpersonal skills as excellent, communication at a 6 or 7 and complaint resolution skills at a 9. He explained that he has dealt with grievances and problems and has a natural knack for conflict resolution. He noted that he has a model for formal grievances and goes through a process of steps. He gave an example of the Job Corps where there was a staff disagreement and he made the effort to separate the parties, isolate the situation, talk with them and get them back together to discuss it. He reviewed how he helped them to come up with a plan to resolve it. He noted that this is the procedure he has used and has been very successful. He pointed out that if it is a conflict in character, the solution is to have the two parties work together on projects and this method has always ended up in a correction of the relationships. He explained it has worked almost 100 percent of the time. He noted the need for documentation for a human resource

perspective. He noted that whether working with a Laborer or an Executive of a Board he can interact with them all due to his personality and character.

Public safety is something which should be a main concern of those holding public offices or positions where this responsibility is in one's jurisdiction. I consider a DPW Director falling into this category. What are your views regarding safety issues which come under the purview of your department? When answering, please elaborate by asserting a cause and effect scenario. Example: a raised sidewalk could cause a tripping accident and bodily harm. *Mr.*

Tober responded that safety is number one and as soon as a situation is known about to secure the area with signs and cones and once secured then look at solving the problem. He noted it is important to find out what the root of the problem is, such as drainage or frost heaves, then to dig up and remove the drainage issue. He explained that once known about it has to be acted upon quickly as safety is paramount and nothing would justify the injury of a person. He noted that staff should not put their body in a position where they can be hurt, and explained his OSHA 10 Certifications and training and the responsibility comes with it. He gave an example of an oak tree at the Town of Holliston with crack down the side and he had to have tree removed as it was leaning toward the road.

Many of us serve on boards and committees as liaisons, however it will be important for this position to work with various agencies and organizations such as MassDOT, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). Describe your experience interacting and working with both state and local officials, as well as outside organizations that all will have regular contact with this position. *Mr. Tober* advised he has already worked with the Department of Transportation in prior agencies. At the Town of Holliston he advised of funding to redo highway stretches which involved coming up with a plan for the project, including the timeframe and inspections. He advised that he does a lot of activity now with state government, including the Department of Housing and Mental Health. He pointed out his history of working with different agencies, which he felt was transferrable to any agency. He explained that he worked in Chicago for a short while and oversaw grants that he administrated and created, and was a representative for municipality and coordination of the project in Holliston.

Describe your direct experience or working knowledge of the following:

Stormwater Management; specifically MS4. *Mr. Tober* advised he has done a lot of work with drainage structures and redesign but not a lot of grants. **Transportation Planning:** *Mr. Tober* stated he worked snow removal and clearing and has been in charge of that at the Town of Holliston. He advised the operation plan, the routes and the staff are there so when the call comes in it is time to sand and salt etc. He noted his experience with snow clearing and snow plowing is not just from management but also operational and performance, from the ground up. He pointed out that plans should be in place in Standard Operating Procedures on who is taking care of what route. The Department Manager of snow removal should have the plan in place months ahead of time for crews of who does what sanding and it should not be something new.

Working with Utility Companies:

Grant Writing/Grant Management: *Mr. Tober* gave an example from Chicago where he worked for the Salvation Army and had two training and feeding operation grants there. He advised it takes the same kind of discipline in terms of administrating, overseeing and reporting on them. He explained that now he works with the Department of Mental Health at the state government level and has a lot of experience with that, the Town of Holliston Department of Transportation, Parks Department and working more on projects.

Describe and give examples of your experience in administrating various projects, and also your ability to work on and manage multiple projects simultaneously. *Mr. Tober* advised that there have been many times that he has had to move resources around. When setting trusses he needed the majority of workers there and other times they need a team concept and approach it with hierarchy and resources. He noted that he resolves problems with planning and likes to have an annual, quarterly and weekly plan in place. He explained that he requires a plan for the next week to be in place from all managers, but is flexible if something comes up. Project planning requires the management aspect to put in advance where resources will be. He noted that when snow happens all hands need to be on deck for snow removal and management. He stated he expects the plan to come in every Friday for the next week. It was pointed out to *Mr. Tober* that there is a difference of snowfall between the Millville area and the Berkshires. *Member Nowak* followed up with an inquiry about the concern of the overuse of salt and that use of sand in the mix is not allowed because of clogging catch basins, and where he sees the balance of road safety and the use of salt. *Mr. Tober* advised that there are other alternatives and salt and sand are not only things that can be used. He pointed out that it is typical to clean out drains every year and staff should be using the clam shell and vacuum.

What extra quality or skill would you bring to the position that potentially sets you apart from other applicants? *Mr. Tober* explained that his hands-on as well as administrative experience sets him apart. He pointed out that he brings a lot of systems experience with work orders, and GIS. He noted that municipalities are now driven by data and he has experience working with it, in addition to knowing the guts of equipment, what the problems are and may know more than someone of less experience.

The Department of Public Works has to coordinate closely with several other department heads with regards to property and building maintenance, and especially with the Community Development Director in the coordination and oversight of construction projects. What will your style of communication be with your colleagues? How do you keep everyone on the same page? *Mr. Tober* advised there is a planning aspect and he intends to meet with each manager, especially in the beginning, to come up with a plan that he would review with each manager on a weekly basis. He would work on the report every week to know exactly what the plan is for the next week and additionally get into the field to meet with the workers themselves. *Member Blanchard* followed up by pointing out that *Mr. Tober* has expressed his desire to be more hands on and not do

so much with office work. He clarified that this position is more office work than hands on as the Operations Supervisor does the hands on for supervising. He inquired if that changed his feeling about the position. *Mr. Tober* advised he is looking for a 50/50 split as he has been an Administrator for last ten years and this would get him out in the field to know the people instead of sitting behind the desk.

Do you have any questions for the Board of Selectmen? *Mr. Tober* asked Board Members what they saw as the greatest obstacles and what they are looking for. *Member Blanchard* pointed out that there are a lot of projects coming up such as Route 8 Pavement Project and the Greylock Glen and he is not sure how much of a role the DPW would play in implementing them. It was clarified that the funding for the projects is coming from the State. It was explained that the Water District, which is not part of Town government, had a project that resulted in road condition issues and it would be DPW Director to make sure projects are put together right. *Mr. Tober* advised he has had a lot of interaction with the state, and that a lot of problems can be avoided in the planning part such as knowing where the ledge is going into it. Analysis should be done on the roads and in a project asphalt doesn't just get torn up and new asphalt laid down but drain structures should be planned out and put in properly. He pointed out that the operation of the whole department is done by the Managers and he doesn't want to run into problems yet there is always going to be something unplanned that comes up. *Member Nowak* advised that deferred maintenance has been a problem in this community and then it becomes more expensive and complicated. *Mr. Tober* responded that if you let things go too long it complicates things. He inquired who the Town of Adams has that is just dedicated to finding grants. He noted that if you foresee that the projects cannot be extended any more unless you can find alternatives you put yourself against the wall. He noted that planning is the key and also getting the funds to do the projects. *Member Duval* noted that anyone taking the position will be coming from the outside as well as overseeing employees that are unionized. He inquired how he would begin interaction with the DPW Team if hired. *Mr. Tober* advised he would institute team building exercises, because to have a lot of interaction with each manager is key and he would cultivate the knowledge in each one of the staff to provide the leadership. He noted that if they are being creative and doing the job, he would have them continue to do so as he won't be there forever and someone else needs to be cultivated too to let them grow. The determinants of a team are the people that work and cultivate the team to be a collaborative system. *Chairman Hoyt* advised that the Town has been without a DPW Director since February 2018 when the Interim DPW Director retired, and the Town has spent time making sure the department is structured to support a DPW Director. She noted there is approximately \$238,000 in Chapter 90 funding, 56 miles of roadway in 23 square miles and 13 staff members so some of work has had to go to different departments. Community Development has been managing the Chapter 90 funds, grant management and project management, which need to come back to the DPW. She noted the community expectations on the DPW and that managing the customer service piece was important, but provided both challenges and a lot of opportunity. *Mr. Tober* advised he has been in this situation, and recalled that one of his assignments from the Superintendent was dealing with irate taxpayers. He noted this is one of his

fortes because of his ability to retain his professional demeanor, and in property management and all sorts of situations occur which require the ability to deal with people. He explained that he would represent the Town of Adams well or he would lose credibility as a leader and that challenges help you to grow.

At 5:04 p.m. the Board of Selectmen took a brief recess, and was called back to order at 5:52 p.m.

PAUL MARKLAND, 6:00 P.M.

Chairman Hoyt gave Candidate Markland an introduction to the Board Members and outlined the interview process. He was asked to give a brief background about himself and his interest in working for the Town of Adams. *Mr. Markland* advised he was born and raised in North Adams and started a career with an Associate's Degree in Construction Technology. He noted he worked with J. H. Maxymillian before starting his own business and learned the work from the ground up. He explained that the building trade was his main forte, but he has experience in piping, foundations, excavation, industrial, residential, and commercial. He stated he started in North Adams as the Building Inspector and when the position in Public Services came up he became the Assistant Department of Public Services Officer. He explained that Adams intrigued him since the position opened up a couple years ago and he has not had a lot of change in his working career so he is up for the challenge and interested in helping.

Have you read the job description? What in your education and professional history has prepared and qualified you for this position? *Mr. Markland* advised he had read the job description and he felt his years of experience and education have prepared him for this position. He noted that there is not much in the construction industry that he has not seen or come across as he has been doing this for thirty-five years and he is more than qualified.

Entering into a new leadership position where you are under scrutiny by employees, many who have years of service, can be intimidating. There becomes an atmosphere of coziness and lax protocol which is not uncommon to those serving in municipal agencies. This is not intended to be a knock to our DPW employees, but a workplace reality in most Town and City municipalities. How would your leadership and management abilities be used to maximize the productivity and creativity of your workforce and how would you institute these changes if you deemed them necessary? *Mr. Markland* advised he deals with this day to day as he oversees twenty-six employees of four different departments. He noted that staffing has issues, there are constituent complaints, broken things and repairs need to be done in a timely manner. He advised that when dealing with staff some may not agree with you, and when there is a personnel problem, he encourages collaboration, rather than screaming, yelling and having animosity.

It is one of the goals of this Board to have a database of our streets, bridges, and culverts that helps us identify the items that have been completed, inspected, etc. What software programs can you use immediately at a high level of skill? Can you describe any GIS or database

management experience you have? *Mr. Markland* advised this is one of his weaker points as he is only a moderate computer user. He noted he has used GIS through the Assessor system but has not done a lot of work with that yet. He stated he uses Excel, Microsoft XP, does his own reports and has not had a GIS system. He currently has no system in use to track the status of bridges in North Adams but he is interested in attending database training if provided.

The DPW has a significant vehicle fleet and a responsibility of the Director is to coordinate proper use and maintenance of these resources with staff Mechanics. What is your level of familiarity and experience with equipment maintenance and operation? *Mr. Markland* advised he works day to day with two mechanics on older equipment which require many repairs. He advised that unless a general repair can be done in-house they may not do it, however safety is a big issue. *Chairman Hoyt* inquired what system is currently in place to track maintenance. He responded that currently in use is filing by hand, which is archaic but works. It was noted that there are a lot of maintenance programs out there and there is program through a MIIA grant that could be researched. It was explained that this information would be helpful through budget season to get a better sense of the age of the fleet and its needs.

How would you individually rate your interpersonal, communication and complaint resolution skills? *Mr. Markland* advised his interpersonal skills are at an 8 or an A-. He noted his communication skills are good and complaint resolution skills he deals with every day, and do the repairs right away.

Public safety is something which should be a main concern of those holding public offices or positions where this responsibility is in one's jurisdiction. I consider a DPW Director falling into this category. What are your views regarding safety issues which come under the purview of your department? When answering, please elaborate by asserting a cause and effect scenario. Example: a raised sidewalk could cause a tripping accident and bodily harm. *Mr. Markland* noted that sidewalk issue is a seasonal problem, and if it is a major trip issue it would need to be dealt with right away. He noted he deals with that yearly. Another scenario is potholes, and the crew does their best to take care of them within budgetary constraints. Trees dying, decaying, or wood bore issues may require cutting the limb. He noted there is a need to take the equipment and take care of the issue at hand.

Many of us serve on boards and committees as liaisons, however it will be important for this position to work with various agencies and organizations such as MassDOT, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). Describe your experience interacting and working with both state and local officials, as well as outside organizations that all will have regular contact with this position. *Mr. Markland* noted that he has a good rapport with David Stokes from MassDOT District 1 and had done projects with the former director. He is working to get bridges on the TIP has not had a lot of contact with the District and works with the local offices but has not had a lot of issues requiring him

to deal with them. He pointed out that he has done a couple grant writing efforts for safety equipment because the staff at City Hall does the grant writing through the Community Development and Town Administrator offices. He expressed that he has no issue with doing that. *Chairman Hoyt* inquired about experience working with Chapter 90 Funds. *Mr. Markland* advised he does all of the Chapter 90 processing and works with the Mayor to decide what roads will be paved. He noted he uses \$300,000 of paving funds every year for specifications and measuring, he does everything but bid packages and has done \$3 Million in projects, line painting, guard rail work and more. He explains he oversees the project start to finish and paving projects are tracked by computer, as dates are important to have. He explained that it is good fortune to get 10 years out of a road, but mostly there is a lot of mill and fill. He pointed out that sometimes if the road is bad they do shimming and 1.5 inch refill, and redo all structures but he saves money by doing it himself if he doesn't have to hire engineers.

Describe your direct experience or working knowledge of the following:

Stormwater Management; specifically MS4. *Mr. Markland* advised you never know what you will have for a snowstorm and have got to watch the temperature factor, which is tough. He noted that people expect the roads black and want the roads safe. He explained he deals with staff personalities, who drives what vehicle, their capabilities and there are things to figure out. He noted that North Adams got a waiver on MS4. He stated it went through administration and as North Adams doesn't have a center of wetlands it never came back so he has not had to look into it. *Vice Chairman Bush* asked how *Mr. Markland* would handle microbursts that have taken place causing Adams to flood badly. *Mr. Markland* advised that if there is enough staff he would rather be proactive than reactive. He would clean out the front and back end of a culvert. He noted he was in his current position for Tropical Storm Irene and worked with public safety and the ambulance service in prior meetings. He explained that they stayed alert, closed roads and staff was out there. He pointed out it was difficult to keep people safe because they would not listen and were out there in the storm. Blacktop issues with the road unfolded, like East Road and Lime Street, as the infrastructure is old and hard to deal with so ultimately the crew becomes a repair team. **Transportation Planning, Working with Utility Companies, Grant Writing/Grant Management:** *Mr. Markland* noted he had done a couple grants and is up for the challenge.

Describe and give examples of your experience in administrating various projects, and also your ability to work on and manage multiple projects simultaneously. *Mr. Markland* responded that with four departments he is handing out daily lists. He noted that today there was a water break, sewer calls, a road closure, as safety is of big importance. He explained that he handled constituent complaints at the same time. He noted that cemetery issues are ongoing every day and there are many different personalities and problems to handle as well as the day to day grind. He pointed out that he handles Highway, Parks & Recreation, Cemetery and Water, as well as overseeing the landfill operation and removal, and vehicle maintenance.

What extra quality or skill would you bring to the position that potentially sets you apart from other applicants? *Mr. Markland* advised his experience and municipality growth are assets, as well as a great rapport with staff which would help him be proactive instead of reactive. *Member Blanchard* inquired how much involvement *Mr. Markland* had on the Curran Highway Project, and he advised that it was handled completely by Mass Highway. It was noted that there is a two-phase major project of Route 8 through Town, the first part being the southern section up to McDonalds and the second section north. *Member Duval* inquired how he would be more proactive with the help. *Mr. Markland* advised he would learn their skillsets and put the right people in the right jobs for mason repairs and create the best patch crew by feeling out who is stronger at those as safety is a big issue.

The Department of Public Works has to coordinate closely with several other department heads with regards to property and building maintenance, and especially with the Community Development Director in the coordination and oversight of construction projects. What will your style of communication be with your colleagues? How do you keep everyone on the same page? *Mr. Markland* advised that having meetings is where to start as communication is big. He noted he would have a lot of public meetings and a lot of events throughout the year involving the Fire Department, Police Department, Community Development, Electrical and Building departments. *Member Duval* inquired if he had funding and was being proactive, what he would implement. *Mr. Markland* advised he would love to see the Greylock Glen move forward as it intrigues him. He noted that Adams is an exciting little town with a lot going on and is a beautiful area. *Member Duval* inquired *Mr. Markland's* thoughts on Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) taking over the purchasing program. *Mr. Markland* advised he uses it for only about five or six different items such as salt, it is an easy program to use and BRPC did an awesome job. He noted that vendors and packages are in and advertising is not cheap. *Member Duval* advised that employees are unionized and have an Operations Supervisor who is doing a good job. As the Town has not recently had a DPW Director, he inquired how *Mr. Markland* would interact with employees. *Mr. Markland* advised he would have a meeting right away to introduce himself, listen to them if they have questions and get the ball rolling to find out their strengths and weaknesses. He would also get out there to know the streets, buildings, and staff which will take some time.

Do you have any questions for the Board of Selectmen? *Mr. Markland* inquired from the Board what their expectations are of the DPW Director. *Chairman Hoyt* advised that the Town has been without a DPW Director for 18 months and is looking for someone to come in and take work off the Town Administrator, Community Development Director and Operations Supervisor's plate who have assumed the duties of the DPW Director in the interim. It was noted that the DPW Director is going to be managing 23 square miles, 56 miles road, 1526 structures, \$238,000 of Chapter 90 funds, half the staff currently in North Adams and a tight budget. A DPW Director will be managing these challenges and finding opportunities within them to move this community forward. *Mr. Markland* advised that budget is an everyday issue. He explained that he did a lot of work with Community Development on road projects, and for five or six years has been working on the parks

and playgrounds. He noted he oversees them and is on the Selection Committee for design teams as well as overseeing complete projects and following up with contractors. *Chairman Hoyt* advised that the DPW Director will be managing high level items and managing taxpayer expectations as customer service interactions are very important. *Mr. Markland* stated he deals with it as the norm, and in a timely manner. He pointed out that he does a drive by on issues to assess whether they are dangerous. *Member Blanchard* advised his expectation is to have the DPW Director remove items from Community Development Director, to do road and parking lot projects and taking on items that will allow her to utilize her time for the Greylock Glen and Hoosac Valley Coal and Grain Park. He noted that major projects are coming up, such as the Route 8 Project, and that the Town needs to get back into the paving schedule it has deviated from over the last several years. *Town Administrator Green* gave some Wastewater Treatment Plant background and regulatory compliance information as well as the significant upgrades that need to be done. He provided some details on the issues there that need to be addressed, such as how to pay for it and how to phase it in. He provided details on concrete deterioration and failure, engineering proposal and research costs, repair, replacement and the need to review these with the best and most efficient solutions. *Mr. Markland* advised he has no experience with wastewater, but only just what goes to the plant. He inquired about building maintenance, how many public buildings there are, their condition, age, heating and cooling systems, and if there are maintenance plans in place. A brief outline was provided of the diverse inventory of public buildings. It was explained that most repairs are done by DPW staff unless they are outside of their ability and shifting priorities, and HVAC is done by outside contractors. It was further explained that the DPW Director would research with this with the Town Administrator as there is no HVAC contractor to look at compressors and equipment. Elevator maintenance contracts were discussed and it was noted that the DPW Director would work together with the Town Administrator to look at all of those systems as the Town can run into financial problems if not on top of vetting the vendors and paying attention to the work. It was explained that the DPW Director by Town Charter is responsible for public building maintenance, capital building projects, parks, grounds and cemetery. *Mr. Markland* advised he has worked with Community Development on projects, Chapter 90 is his big forte and he has done big projects with Chapter 90 for daily maintenance as it is a great funding source and he leans on it hard for engineering. He noted he was the Clerk of the Works for Drury High School and oversaw the project, taking on the job of local inspectors where he documented with pictures, concrete samples, and made sure everything was done properly to protect the City's money. He noted the project came in \$1.5 Million over budget due to soil issues causing inside excavation which was a big cost overrun. The former Conte School path up through the hospital was a Chapter 90 project he managed, for the amount of \$318,000 and he noted that most of the projects he managed were dead on or under cost. He advised he did a project by the reservoir which required the reuse of asphalt and he expects to get 15 or more years out of the roadway.

The Board of Selectmen took a recess at 6:50 p.m. and reconvened at 7:13 p.m.

MICHAEL SALEM, 5:30 P.M.

Introduction: *Chairman Hoyt* gave Candidate Markland an introduction to the Board Members and outlined the interview process. He was asked to give a brief background about himself and his interest in working for the Town of Adams. *Mr. Salem* advised of his current employment, and noted that he was working with Salem Trucking and MassDOT in Massachusetts. He noted his interest in this position was because it is a good opportunity in a cute, quaint town surrounded by a lot of mountains, at the bottom of a basin.

Have you read the job description? What in your education and professional history has prepared and qualified you for this position? *Mr. Salem* advised he has over 10 years of experience working with state agencies, running a budget, capital planning, balancing a budget, correcting a budget and preplanning for cutting to get back into balance. He noted he has a lot of experience with catch basins, road repair, pulling stumps, putting in catch basins, putting in piping, paving of asphalt and planning it with different agencies with Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and other state agencies to be sure guidelines are met.

Entering into a new leadership position where you are under scrutiny by employees, many who have years of service, can be intimidating. There becomes an atmosphere of coziness and lax protocol which is not uncommon to those serving in municipal agencies. This is not intended to be a knock to our DPW employees, but a workplace reality in most Town and City municipalities. How would your leadership and management abilities be used to maximize the productivity and creativity of your workforce and how would you institute these changes if you deemed them necessary? *Mr. Salem* noted that he is only as successful as they are and vice versa, so he will use his current experience. He stated he doesn't like to go into a place knowing anything about anyone because it is irrelevant and he is coming in with a new slate. He explained that he needs to observe and learn the different individuals. He stated he would be taking notes, unless it is a safety issue, and get with the different supervisors and working foremen to listen to what their needs are and solicit their opinion on whether it is truthful or just a want. He said it could take 30 to 60 days, and depending on the severity of the change that needs to take place he will need to reach out to those involved, such as the Board Members or Town Administrator to start to formulate a plan. He noted the importance of communication and developing a plan that is not all about him and work toward implementing the plan. He noted an instance where he could not make a specific purchase out of a state budget so it was donated as a morale booster, as a personal thing from his team.

It is one of the goals of this Board to have a database of our streets, bridges, and culverts that helps us identify the items that have been completed, inspected, etc. What software programs can you use immediately at a high level of skill? Can you describe any GIS or database management experience you have? *Mr. Salem* advised he is very proficient with Microsoft and

Apple based programs, and utilizes the Cardinal program which is a program involved with doing mapping of every catch basin and culvert pipe, including the mapping with foot diameter, type of pipe, concrete or cast iron, and length across the street. He noted that the access is available on iPad to let staff know where there are pipes and infrastructure and helps with making a capital plan, grading pipes, catch basins and culverts as they go along. He noted that every time work is done, whether removing a tree, fixing broken asphalt or culvert pipe, they are logging in the date and what was done, the tonnage of asphalt, acreage being cut, ditch work and are monitoring themselves. He explained that the team all has access to the program, doing tracking and showing where the money is being sent. He advised that it provides metrics and can be transferred into a graph chart showing from dates past to today, the physical cost and where and how the money is being spent, monthly, quarterly and yearly.

The DPW has a significant vehicle fleet and a responsibility of the Director is to coordinate proper use and maintenance of these resources with staff Mechanics. What is your level of familiarity and experience with equipment maintenance and operation? *Mr. Salem* advised he has a lot of experience with preventive maintenance of equipment. He explained that he knows the service of caterpillar, including grease points and is responsible for 37 pieces of equipment. He advised he has to arrange with the maintenance shop for the service of and tracking the preventive maintenance, the cost including billing and charge backs to other agencies and communication with the shop regarding the products needed. *Chairman Hoyt* inquired about the tracking process and it was explained that Microsoft Word and email are currently used. He advised the costs come off of the budget, and shows where the expenses come in with record keeping for each item. He also keeps track of a driver log and inspections.

How would you individually rate your interpersonal, communication and complaint resolution skills? *Mr. Salem* advised that his communication is excellent. He explained he regularly carbon copies people, and unless it is a safety issue that needs to be handled immediately, he keeps at least one or two people in the loop. Interpersonal skills he noted are good and there is always room for improvement. He explained that sometimes when there is a lot going on and he is swamped in many different directions he cannot explain everything that needs to be explained for general cooperation until after the fact. Complaint resolution skills he explained are taken with concern tickets, for things like a ditch or a hole in the road and complaints are answered every day by him or the working foreman. He noted that with personnel he has an open door policy and address issues because if he doesn't find the time to help them with their problems will be a complete failure.

Public safety is something which should be a main concern of those holding public offices or positions where this responsibility is in one's jurisdiction. I consider a DPW Director falling into this category. What are your views regarding safety issues which come under the purview of your department? When answering, please elaborate by asserting a cause and effect scenario. Example: a raised sidewalk could cause a tripping accident and bodily harm. *Mr. Salem* noted he was a firefighter for 14 years so he is into public safety and the safety of the people

around him, including his crew. He pointed out that there are numerous discrepancies in what people think are safety issues. He gave an example of a call received for a raised sidewalk at 2:30 p.m. and given the time of day and resources, that there was no water coming out of the ground, he would at a minimum put cones around the sidewalk and cordon off the area, and taking a couple parking spaces and coning them off to give people an off-sidewalk path with signs for the detour area.

Many of us serve on boards and committees as liaisons, however it will be important for this position to work with various agencies and organizations such as MassDOT, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). Describe your experience interacting and working with both state and local officials, as well as outside organizations that all will have regular contact with this position. *Mr. Salem* explained that he got experience writing grants and taking part in state agencies that distribute grants through Ashburnham Parks and Recreation. He noted there were two parks and he helped assist replacing Sweeney Playground and put a basketball court into a hockey rink. He advised of his experience dealing with different agencies and noted that everything done gets involved with several town agencies and permit processes to follow. He explained his past extensive experience working with District 3 of MassDOT and that he would reach out with different engineers, meet with DEP and DEQ and keep them apprised as well as obtaining proper permits, listening to their concerns and provide corrections as needed. He noted he would communicate by phone, email, send plans and by having the project preplanned.

The Board of Selectmen called a brief recess at 7:41 p.m. and resumed at 7:44 p.m.

Describe your direct experience or working knowledge of the following:

Stormwater Management; specifically MS4: *Mr. Salem* advised he has some experience and has a DEQ license for erosion control, sediment control, designing and building retention ponds.

Transportation Planning: *Mr. Salem* advised he may be lacking a little in this area. He had engineers involved with transportation and has side by side experience with design implementation. He noted he sat down to develop traffic needs for a 4-way stop by speaking with appropriate departments for a flashing light and widening turns, as well as discussing plans and determining what was feasible, as well as pulling permits.

Working with Utility Companies: *Mr. Salem* advised he is very familiar with this, uses DigSafe and is communicating and marking with them plus working with them on an emergency basis. **Grant Writing/Grant Management:** *Mr. Salem* advised he is also has experience with them, and most of the grants were to replace a vehicle or playground equipment. He pointed out that the crew cannot physically remove equipment because most grants want to see it so sometimes it is necessary to leave the structure in the ground and caution tape it off as a contingency of the grant.

Describe and give examples of your experience in administrating various projects, and also your ability to work on and manage multiple projects simultaneously. *Mr. Salem* advised of his rule of delegation, and noted he is not afraid to pass things along to the Working Supervisor or

Foreman to get things done when there is so much to do. He advised he would sit down with those he delegated to for a report on how it went and what is needed for the next day. He explained he is currently doing a few projects; removing a center island and changing it to a controlled intersection and a lot of engineers involved with it; 22 miles of cutback of brush and grass before the winter which is going to be a couple week project and is delegated to Working Supervisor who communicates daily what is needed and how it is going; also a project with a collapsed culvert and a Working Foreman went out to DigSafe it and fill it with asphalt to get a secondary road through Thanksgiving, and the pipe is coming in this Monday morning.

What extra quality or skill would you bring to the position that potentially sets you apart from other applicants? *Mr. Salem* advised that one of his strengths is with Parks and Recreation. He outlined examples of events that he instituted, including a Tee Lighting, an Easter Egg Hunt and a Movie Night. He noted he put together team events which included the Fire and Police Departments for parades, including a marching band and singers for a choir event on the Town Hall stairs which had a 750 person turnout on the first year. He advised he closed down Main Street for a parade with the cooperation of the DPW and Police Department to detour and on the second year businesses were involved with a turnout of 1,000. He advised he directed the refurbishment of a 15 year old playground that was falling apart and out of Massachusetts code. He was able to beautify the area with arborvitaes and multi-purpose fruit trees that flower in the spring and provide apples that the kids pick every year. He noted he used a park and stuffed Easter Eggs and through volunteers and donations was able to put on the Easter Egg Hunt. He advised he organized a skating event with a local hunting association, and people were there with fire pits roasting marshmallows. The DPW and Police Department brought lighting to the area. *Chairman Hoyt* pointed out that all the events mentioned were done by groups in town and required lots of coordination. *Mr. Salem* clarified that as the Chair of the Parks and Recreation he was a volunteer that went to a paid position, and was appointed by the Town Administrator. Selectmen came to meetings to give insight from the public for plan adjustment. As the Chair he was responsible for a budget and for creating a five year capital plan. He advised he became certified by the state to do playground inspections, and has come up with plans of action to fix them. He provided an example of non-splinter mulch levels needing to be 12 to 15 inches deep.

The Department of Public Works has to coordinate closely with several other department heads with regards to property and building maintenance, and especially with the Community Development Director in the coordination and oversight of construction projects. What will your style of communication be with your colleagues? How do you keep everyone on the same page? *Mr. Salem* advised that the Town Administrator has department head meetings as one avenue of communication, and he uses email, phone, reaching out to people, and taking pictures to propose what it will look like before sending it to the group involved to allow for editing to their standards to make for a more productive meeting. *Member Nowak* asked about his knowledge of wetland regulations in the Massachusetts General Laws and whether he has a firm handle on wetland issues and knowledge to manage a project. *Mr. Salem* responded that his experience in

Virginia has given him training and he has a reference book that he brings with him for issues to be sure he is staying in compliance. He noted he has associates on the environmental side of MassDOT to ask for guidelines so he has resources and is not afraid to ask about something he doesn't know about. *Member Duval* noted Mr. Salem's three positions on his resume and asked for clarification on them. *Mr. Salem* noted he is still involved with Salem Trucking, which operates out of Sterling, and Westminister, MA. He explained that while working in Virginia he takes phone calls overnight and assists as needed. If offered a position he expressed that he would be a resident and tax payer in the town. He pointed out that Virginia has a lot of great opportunities. In the Virginia Department of Transportation he still paves and designs roads and is responsible for every single road as there are no DPWs there. He outlined that he is responsible for Routes 95 and 85 and a county worth of primary and secondary roadways. He advised it has been a great opportunity, and has been able to receive a lot of knowledge and classes that would be difficult to receive in Massachusetts because classes have to be sponsored. He noted an example of becoming certified with underground fuel tanks. He pointed out that although he is very interested in the Virginia Department of Transportation, his family does not want to relocate to Virginia. *Chairman Hoyt* inquired how many roads and miles Mr. Salem is responsible for in Virginia. *Mr. Salem* advised he covers 15 miles of interstate roadway which amounts to 23 miles east to west which is equivalent to Route 2 in Concord in both directions. He advised he could not give a rough guess of the secondary road system, but it is 10 miles from across the county, north to south. He pointed out that he cannot successfully plow it with only 16 trucks and is bringing in 32 contractor trucks from a \$5.5 Million budget. It was explained that Adams has 23 square miles, 56 miles of roads, 13 staff, \$238,000 of Chapter 90 funds, and a salt budget of \$250,000 every year for the balance of a half million dollars with labor and the capital budget. The wastewater budget is built into it with 7 positions, and managing constituents is also a challenge. *Mr. Salem* advised his \$5.5 Million budget includes guardrails, paving of the interstate, and brings in a federal budget which he has to account for regularly. He explained how he may be over one month due to unanticipated costs, and finds ways to trim the next month to keep balanced, and noted that sometimes things are put off. He explained he solves problems with communication and is not afraid to ask for help, listen to and ask for ideas.

Do you have any questions for the Board of Selectmen? *Mr. Salem* advised that many of his questions were answered in his interviews. He noted his interest in field usage, management and facility use request and has thoughts on that due to his experience with the Parks Commission. *Chairman Hoyt* pointed out that if hired, he would start right at the budget season and would have a goal from the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator to keep things status quo. *Mr. Salem* noted that there are autonomous trucks and cars in Virginia and vehicles that are reading the federal signs, will look out for a vehicle, and in 2.5 miles it forgets the sign. He expressed concern about safety as employees and equipment could be endangered by these new style vehicles. He pointed out that crew cone and sign placement for traffic to be prepared to stop, but the vehicles don't recognize them and these vehicles are coming soon. He explained that he operates on the side of safety.

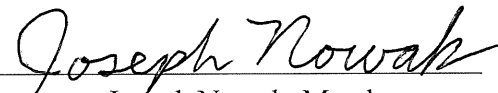
At 8:22 p.m. the Board of Selectmen took a brief recess and was called back to order at 8:25 p.m.

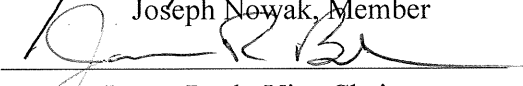
DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION ON DPW DIRECTOR HIRING: It was recommended to deliberate at a later date as there was a lot of information to think about. JG gave information about salary and wage considerations. A request was made to deliberate and make a decision as soon as possible after Thanksgiving, and a request was made for a meeting in early December. Discussion took place on whether to solicit feedback from different people with knowledge and Town Administrator Green was asked to field input from different parties and call references to get information. Brief discussion took place regarding possible meeting dates and times, and it was noted that a draft agenda would be available and posted tomorrow. Town Administrator Green advised he would provide the Board with a summary of the input he gathers. The salary range of the DPW Director position was reviewed. ***Consensus was reached to deliberate at a later date.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: Board Members wished each other and citizens a Happy Thanksgiving.

ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn the meeting, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



Joseph Nowak, Member


James Bush, Vice Chairman



John Duval, Member


Christine Hoyt, Chairman