

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Wednesday, January 15, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
1st Floor, Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Hoyt. Present were Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Blanchard and Nowak. Also present was Town Administrator Green.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The meeting minutes for December 18, 2019, December 23, 2019 and the January 8, 2020 meetings were presented for approval. *Motion made by Member Blanchard to waive reading of the December 18, 2019 and December 23, 2019 minutes and approve them as submitted, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous. Motion made by Member Blanchard to waive reading of the January 8, 2020 minutes and approve them as submitted, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Abstention: Member Duval. Voted in favor were Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Blanchard and Nowak. Motion passed.*

PUBLIC COMMENT: Council on Aging Director Erica Girgenti reported that the Council on Aging Tax Program is continuing on this year and they are taking appointments to do taxes for free. She encouraged seniors to find out if they are eligible for the Circuit Breaker Credit to get money back. Appointments are limited and she recommended making an appointment soon before they are booked up. She announced that the February newsletter is forthcoming as well.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation of Support for Project Sunflower: Richard Tavelli of the Adams Arts Advisory Board gave an overview of the presentation given at the December 18, 2019 meeting on the project and the upcoming events regarding the Susan B. Anthony celebratory events scheduled throughout the year. He gave a brief background on Suffrage Rights and noted that the intent was to create awareness and interest by presenting images of the sunflower throughout the community. A test project is already in place at the Jones Block with sunflower images and more ideas will be forthcoming. He advised that this is the formal kick-off of the program. Member Nowak noted that he had talked with Tom Morin of Morin Gardens about getting yellow and purple flowers for the Town planters and they are looking at what flowers would last throughout the summer. He thanked Mr. Tavelli for all of his work and efforts.

Ratification of Part Time Council on Aging Administrative Assistant: John Naughton. Chairman Hoyt read the letter provided by Town Administrator Green recommending the ratification of John Naughton to the position of Part Time Council on Aging Administrative Assistant. Town Administrator Green and Council on Aging Director Girgenti advised that Mr. Naughton had been working as a Van Driver for the Council on Aging and had additionally volunteered his time, showing his dedication and devotion to his duty. His background and work history was outlined. It was noted that a 19 hour per week Van Driver position will then become open as a domino effect.

Motion made by Member Nowak to ratify the appointment of John Naughton to the position of Part Time Administrative Assistant to the Council on Aging, at the Grade 5, Step 3 rate of \$17.48 per hour effective January 20, 2020, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

Application for Common Victualer License: Timothy Samson, The Pitch Fork, 85 Commercial Street, Adams, MA. Mr. Samson advised it will be a take-out restaurant at 85 Commercial Street, and will offer a family budget menu such as chicken fingers, hamburgers, hot dogs and tacos. Business hours will be 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and closed on Mondays. It was noted that the application for exemption for workman's compensation insurance had been submitted to the Department of Industrial Accidents, and is pending receipt by mail. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to approved the Common Victualer License for The Pitch Fork for 2020, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

Facility Use Request, Adams Visitors Center: Bianca Walker, on behalf of the Alzheimer's Association, October 3, 2020 from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for the Berkshire County Walk to End Alzheimers. Council on Aging Director Girgenti advised that it was confirmed with DCR that this event will not be affected by the pavement project as it will be utilizing the section of Ashuwillticook Rail Trail from the Train Station to Lime Street. She noted that last year it was a huge success and brought several hundred people into Adams. Chairman Hoyt requested this item be tabled pending additional information, insurance, and the construction timelines. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to table the Facility Use Request of the Adams Visitors Center by the Alzheimers Association for October 3, 2020, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

Annual Appointments, DPW Director Robert Tober: DPW Director Tober was welcomed by Board Members and a brief background was given on his experience and education. DPW Director Tober advised the Board that there is a lot of work to be done and he is becoming familiar with the projects and facilities. The annual appointments of the Safety Committee and Traffic Commission Member positions and their responsibilities were briefly reviewed and it was noted that these positions are historically held by the DPW Director. It was noted that two other pending appointments that need further discussion are the Tree Warden and Trench Board positions, which are in the field and may be best filled by the field person. An inquiry was made about whether trench caging is in use, and further research will be done on the equipment inventory. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to appoint Robert Tober to the Safety Committee and Traffic Commission, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

Review of Current Restrictive Business Zoning: Community Development Director Cesan explained the intent of the review is to improve the business climate and to assure an adequate supply of commercial and industrial zoned sites in town. She noted this is important to be attractive to new businesses and residents and the Town is taking steps to support and improve zoning. A brief overview of the percentage of land area in Adams zoned as commercial or industrial was given to the Board, and it was noted that industrial zoning is mostly concentrated in the northern part of town. A breakdown of the viable areas for commercial or industrial use was done to show how Adams compares to other local communities. It was noted that Adams is constrained by topography and the river, and where land is available is where neighborhoods are. Split zones for commercial properties was noted as an issue that dates back decades and now causes limitations to businesses wishing to expand. It was emphasized that the redevelopment of underutilized and blighted properties is critical. The Town will continue to use Brownfields for contamination cleanup and pursue aggressive measures. Zoning boundary proposals to allow more businesses to expand in Adams were reviewed, and it was noted that a review may be done of existing businesses to rezone them appropriately.

The Town intends to look at industrial zoning to see what is appropriate for a long-term master plan, and is ready to start the process and pursue a formal public hearing with the Planning Board in February. The process to change zoning was outlined, and it was explained that the Town Administrator or Board of Selectmen can formally initiate it to begin. Staff is looking at commercial zoning currently to eliminate the split parcel phenomenon and it was noted that industrial zoning requires community planning which will include other agencies to determine whether the zoning should be commercial or residential. Community Development Director Cesan was thanked for providing the information and it was noted that the Town is not trying to take property but to advance the community and lessen the tax rate which requires working together to come up with a plan. It was pointed out that past maps indicate zoning was based on the industry of the time and it was time to move to a more uniform process. It was noted that public information sessions are part of the process and the tax collector, building and code enforcement processes are addressing blighted properties and demolitions of blighted buildings were discussed. ***Motion made by Member Duval to move the process to the Planning Board to begin the process of reviewing the zoning bylaws to improve commercial zoning, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Town Administrator: *Town Administrator Green* announced that Police Chief Tarsa is retiring in June, which gives the Town time to find a replacement that fits the Town and the community. He advised that he has started the process, and his goal is to attempt to have a new Chief in place in June. He noted that Chief Tarsa has served on the Police Department since 1984.

Town Counsel: *Town Counsel St. John III* advised he reviewed and commented upon staff requests regarding several proposed agreements. He reviewed and commented upon a proposed Change of Manager application for the Mt. Club. He prepared and recorded in the Registry of Deeds Notices of Petition for the MJD tax foreclosure case and prepared and sent a letter to the Land Court regarding the status of the MJD limited liability company, as requested by the Court.

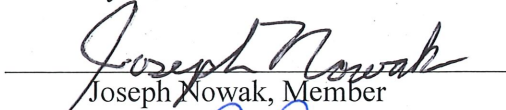
SUB-COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS: *Member Nowak* advised that the Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee is hosting a Musical Bingo at the Bass Water Grill, and there will not be tickets available at the door so Those interested are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance. He also advised that on February 15th there will be a Red and Black Gala event celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Susan B. Anthony, which will be held at the Berkshire Hills Country Club. There will be musical entertainment and a silent auction. Tickets are \$60 per person and the committee members may be contacted for advance purchase. *Vice Chairman Bush* advised there was a meeting for the Banners for Fallen Heroes, which has generated a lot of interest. On January 21st an announcement will be made about the financing of this initiative. He recommended that anyone who has lost a member of their family to contact the Board of Selectmen Administrative Assistant at 743-8300 x100. He also reported that he attended both Board of Health and Prudential Committee meetings. *Member Duval* advised that he would like to have a meeting regarding the 2020 National Census and what is being done to ensure everyone is being counted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: *Chairman Hoyt* thanked Chief Tarsa for both the time he served for the Town and for providing enough notice of his intent to retire to allow for an adequate recruitment process before he leaves. She announced that Martin Luther King Day is Monday, and encouraged people to pick up a service project where and when possible on 8:30 a.m. at the MCLA Gymnasium. She advised that Louison House will have work projects available.

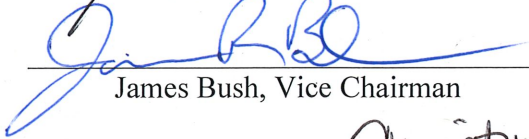
She commended and congratulated Vice Chairman Bush for receiving the Peacemaker Award which will be celebrated at the Day of Service on Monday.

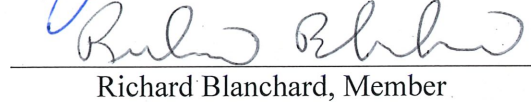
ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn the meeting, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm

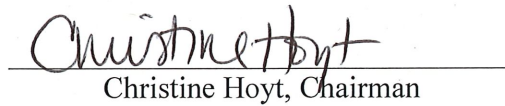
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary


Joseph Nowak, Member


John Duval, Member


James Bush, Vice Chairman


Richard Blanchard, Member


Christine Hoyt, Chairman