

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

Wednesday, February 5, 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.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Hoyt advised that earlier today there was an incident at Bellevue and Glenn Streets, and no information is available at this time. She noted that the Police Department is working with the Massachusetts State Police and any questions are being referred to the Berkshire County District Attorney's Office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The meeting minutes for January 22, 2020 were presented for approval. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Bush to waive reading of the January 22, 2020 minutes and approve them as submitted, second by Member Duval. Vote: unanimous.***

PUBLIC COMMENT: Evan Bates of Arh + Lab Tattoo on 43 Park Street business expressed concern about his landlord's delinquent property taxes impacting his ability to operate his business. Chairman Hoyt advised that the Tax Collector is working with the landlord on a payment plan and noted that the Board of Health is working with Mr. Bates to keep him in business. She noted that the Town Administrator is aware of the situation. Code Enforcement Officer Blaisdell explained that he gave Mr. Bates a temporary permit until April while the situation is worked out. He advised that he had been in communication with the Tax Collector and updated that the property owner is expected to come forth with substantial payments. Council on Aging Director Girgenti announced that the newsletter is coming out and that there will be an upcoming presentation on Monday for anyone enrolled in Medicare or on Mass Health who may be eligible for benefits through Fallon Health. She outlined services offered and announced an informational session will be held on Monday, February 10th at 10:30 a.m. at the Council on Aging. She reported that the Tax Program is doing well and has been able to assist eleven community members today. Appointments are available on Wednesdays and Fridays with five certified tax preparers. She noted that this program does not interfere with office operations and the program is able to use vacant office space. Those interested in taking advantage of this free service are asked to book appointments at (413) 743-8333. She recommended those who no longer have to file anymore explore the opportunity for the circuit breaker credit. She noted that the Tax Program is hoping to reach one hundred returns and if so may end the program in March but may continue to do tax preparation if there are two preparers present at a time up until April 15th. It was clarified that the Fallon Health does not have to be the carrier but it may be an extra plan that would be offered at no extra cost. It is a limited contract through Fallon Health with the State and participants have to be eligible for Medicaid.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of Hoosac Valley Elementary School (HVES) Principal, Rebecca Sawyer: *Principal Sawyer* extended an invitation to the Board Members to come to HVES on February 12th and March 19th for tours of the building and to spend the day to see what kids and teachers are doing. She noted that having a partnership between the Town and the school is important. She offered the opportunity to shadow a student for the day, then to have a period of coffee and conversation with educators and the Superintendent. She also extended invitations for Read Across America Day on March 2nd. *Member Nowak* thanked Principal Sawyer for her work to repair the relationship between Cheshire and Adams and for her putting the importance on education of the children and partnerships.

2020 Federal Census: *Town Clerk Meczywor, Council on Aging Director Girgenti:* *Town Clerk Meczywor* advised that the Town Census documents should have been received in the mail by now. If not, citizens are requested to call the Town Clerk's office and have them resent. Dog license applications and an informational sheet about the Federal Census for 2020 were included with the census forms. It was noted that the Federal Census, which comes out in mid-March, is done every ten years and is very different from the Town Census. Citizens were requested to fill out both. The Library, Council on Aging and the Town Clerk partnered to get information out. On Monday, March 9th at 11:00 a.m. at the Senior Center there will be an informational session with a local representative working for the Federal Census to talk about what to expect and to answer questions. There will also be an evening session on Thursday, March 12th at 6:00 p.m. at the Library. The informational sessions will be posted on the Town Website. A review was done on what citizens should expect for the Federal Census and the request to do an electronic return. The mailings were reviewed and reminder letters and postcards will come out if there is no response, followed by door knockers identified as census workers. The Council on Aging will have computers available for citizens to enter their census data and the dates, times and locations were reviewed. It was clarified that Census reporting secures funding for the local community, highway projects and the school system through grants and the area can lose a state representative if numbers go down. In June a rough final number will be reported. It was explained that the Federal Census for college students goes to where they are living on April 1st and for those living in dual locations information will be provided at the sessions.

Annual Town Election, May 4, 2020: *Town Clerk Meczywor* advised that the Annual Town Election will be Monday, May 4th. The deadline to submit papers is March 16th and the deadline to withdraw is April 1st. She read the list of open positions and recommended those interested call the Town Clerk's office. The information will be posted on the Town website. The "Vote for Susan" committee is very committed to filling the positions. The Council on Aging provides transportation on election days.

Presidential Primary Warrant, March 3, 2020: *Town Clerk Meczywor* advised that the Presidential Primary will be held on March 3rd at the DPW Garage on 92 North Summer Street. A brief review was made of the warrant. The deadline to register to vote for the Presidential Primary or to change party is next Wednesday until 8:00 p.m. If registered as Unenrolled the voter must decide which ballot they want and get it at that time. Specimen ballots will be put up on the Town website and will be available to view also on voting day. It was noted that the State has scheduled early voting to take place from Monday, February 24th to Friday, February 28th during normal business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Town Clerk's office. The process was reviewed and there will be ballots on the wall at the Town Clerk's office. Absentee ballots are available and can be requested. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to accept the Presidential Primary Warrant as presented by the Town Clerk, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

Facility Use Request, Adams Visitors Center: Noah Brown Scholarship Run, May 2, 2020 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. MassDOT and DCR advised that the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail will still be open in this area during this time. All paperwork was noted as being in order, and that the route is a street loop with a request for the building use. *Motion made by Member Blanchard to approve use of Visitors Center for the Noah Brown Scholarship Run, May 2, 2020 from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous.*

Ratifications

Animal-Parking Control Officer: *Kim Witek.* Chairman Hoyt read a letter from Town Administrator Green advising of appointment of Ms. Witek and recommending ratification. *Motion made by Member Duval to ratify the appointment of Kim Witek to the Animal-Parking Control Officer position, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.*

Part Time Council on Aging Van Driver (19 Hours): *Jolene Drosehn.* Chairman Hoyt read the letter from Town Administrator Green advising of the appointment of Ms. Drosehn and recommending ratification. Ms. Drosehn was introduced to the Board and updated Board Members of her interest in upgrading from 10 hour per week to the 19 hour per week position. *Motion made by Member Nowak to ratify the appointment of Jolene Drosehn to the 19 hour per week Part Time Council on Aging Van Driver position, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.*

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator: *Town Administrator Green was not in attendance.*

Town Counsel: *Town Counsel St. John III was not in attendance.*


SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS: *Member Nowak* went to Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership (MTWP) meeting and they have become a board. He advised that a professor from Williams College is the Chair, and gave his background. He noted there is a lot of support from both the federal and state level as they will be in partnership and the main goal is to find funding. He advised that the Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee (ASCCC) has been meeting regularly to plan the celebration events. He advised if anyone wishes to join the group to contact the Town Administrator's office. He announced that the Black and Red Gala event will take place on February 15th at the Berkshire Hills Country Club to celebrate the 200th birthday of Susan B. Anthony and to secure tickets by February 7th. Member Nowak was thanked for all the work he has done and for the work done by the ASCCC. *Member Blanchard* reported that the Public Safety Sub-Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee met. O'Geary's Liquor Store and Lee's Dynasty had hearings with the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC), who issued O'Geary's a warning and Lee's Dynasty a three-day suspension, serving one day with two days suspended with no additional violations for sales to a minor. *Vice Chairman Bush* advised of the Council on Aging meeting which was previously reported on. He advised that the Prudential Committee met regarding the audit from last year. There was a Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District meeting, and work is being done with North Adams to get them on board and identify costs. He reported that the Banners for Fallen Heroes has twelve people enrolled so far and the qualifications include being a resident of Adams and being killed in action. He announced that Adams Community Bank will be providing funding for the project. To have someone included contact the Town Administrator's Office. He reported that there was a Board of Health meeting this evening and that on February 7th he will appear on Public Access Television. *Member Duval* announced that Berkshire Regional Planning Commission discussed information regarding the upcoming census which was already covered.

He advised that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) discussed funding major road projects in the county. The Route 8 Project from the Commercial Street lights to the bridge by Mullen Mayflower is still on track and the bridge will also have work done. The road will be a complete reconstruction including water lines and surveying should begin this spring. He reported that he attended the Public Safety Sub-Committee meeting where the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer discussed the status of buildings in need of major repair, abandoned, and the length of the process. They are looking to get repairs made and get occupants into buildings. If abandoned they must take steps which requires time and court. He noted that Police Chief Tarsa is planning to retire in June and the Board of Selectmen will select a new Police Chief. He reported they discussed the Police Chief job description and a selection process will be developed again. The hope is to bring someone on board for June 1st to spend time with Chief Tarsa. He noted they reviewed the staff profile of the department, addressed the plan for several officers to retire and filling positions.

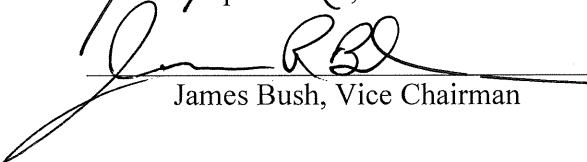
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: *Member Nowak* expressed that regardless of political party affiliation, what he has seen is bothersome regarding the loss of civility and how torn apart the country is. *Member Duval* noted that there are a couple streets in town used as short cuts for drivers and inquired when the next Traffic Commission meeting will be to discuss those areas. It was advised that it is to be scheduled sometime this month. He noted that there is a bylaw that all streets that are not posted have a speed limit of 25mph and he reminded people to take their time when driving the side streets. *Chairman Hoyt* advised that the Colonial Theater will be putting on an event called "No Visible Bruises" on domestic violence through the Berkshire County District Attorney's office. She advised that registration information is on the District Attorney website.

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

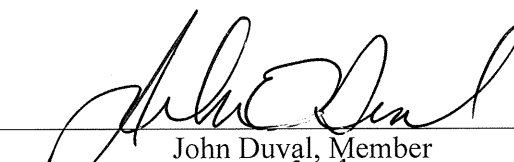
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



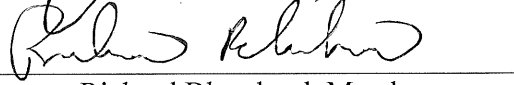
Joseph Nowak, Member



James Bush, Vice Chairman



John Duval, Member



Richard Blanchard, Member

Christine Hoyt, Chairman