

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

CLERK _____

**Wednesday, April 1, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date the Board of Selectmen held a meeting on the first floor of Adams Town Hall. It was announced that Members Blanchard and Duval were attending the meeting remotely for COVID-19 emergency purposes under 9410 CMR 29.10(5). The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Hoyt. Present were Vice Chairman Bush, Member Nowak and Town Administrator Green. Town Clerk Meczywor attended the meeting remotely.

Chairman Hoyt advised that "pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 *Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18*, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Adams Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to view this meeting while in progress may do so by tuning into Channel 1303, thank you to Northern Berkshire Community Television OR by calling (888) 788-0099. Despite our best efforts, if we are not able to provide for real-time access, a record of this meeting will be posted on www.nbctc.org as soon as they are able."

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes for the March 11, 2020 meeting were submitted for approval. ***Motion made by Member Nowak to waive reading the minutes for March 11, 2020 and approve them as submitted, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Roll Call Vote: Nowak, Bush, Blanchard, Duval and Hoyt. Motion passed.***

PUBLIC COMMENT: *Public Comment was taken at (888) 788-0099. No calls were received.*

NEW BUSINESS

COVID-19 Update: *Town Administrator Green* advised that legislation is expected later this week to allow the Town to continue deadlines beyond charter dates. Guidance was also issued concerning restaurant takeout and alcoholic beverages. COVID-19 statistics and the number of new tests conducted statewide were reviewed. Adams has reduced to six confirmed cases, one being a DPW staff member, who has been quarantined. *Member Nowak* read aloud a quote by Pema Chodron and recommended that people practice social distancing in case they are unknowingly a carrier. *Vice Chairman Bush* thanked everyone who is working diligently to mitigate and manage this crisis.

Change of Manager Application: *Pine Brook Pub, 128 Columbia Street, Adams from Mitchell L. Despain to Trent Shafer. Motion made by Vice Chairman Bush to approve the Change of Manager Application for Pine Brook Pub, 128 Columbia Street from Mitchell Despain to Trent Shafer, second by Member Nowak. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Blanchard and Nowak. Motion passed.*

Request to Reschedule Annual Town Election to Monday, June 1, 2020: *Town Clerk Meczywor* read a letter requesting to reschedule the Annual Town Election from Monday, May 4, 2020 to Monday, June 1, 2020 in compliance of Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020. The two offices being contested are the School Board and Library Trustee positions. ***Motion made by Member Nowak to reschedule the Annual Town Election in accordance with the Chapter 45 Acts of 2020 from May 4, 2020 to Monday, June 1, 2020, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Blanchard and Nowak. Motion passed.***

Application for Permit to Place Sign on Public Way: Virginia Duval, "Vote for Susan" Project, on Town Property. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Bush to approve the placement of "Vote for Susan" signs on a Public Way from May 23, 2020 to June 2, 2020, second by Member Nowak. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Blanchard and Nowak. Motion passed.***

Discussion and review of candidates and Appointment of Member of the Police Chief Screening Committee: *Chairman Hoyt* noted that a Member of the Screening Committee stepped down. It was explained that Tim Burdick, Chair of the Finance Committee and an employee of the Adams Community Bank has expressed interest in serving. It was noted that the application window closed on March 27th and there are fourteen applicants that will be forwarded on to the Search Committee. It was noted that the search could still be done and the present staff at the Police Department will continue with proper leadership. It was pointed out that due to the COVID-19 circumstances, all normal timelines are fluid. ***Motion made by Member Nowak to approve Tim Burdick as a Member of the Police Chief Screening Committee, second by Vice Chairman Bush. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Blanchard and Nowak. Motion passed.***

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator: *Town Administrator Green* advised that all Town offices are open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. but the buildings are closed to the public. Citizens with questions are advised to call Town Hall and utilize the voicemail system, email and to use the drop box in front of the building. He noted that the Town is moving ahead with as many projects as possible. Inspectional services have been going out and processing permits and asked citizens to be patient with Town staff. He advised that he is paying attention to all of the legislation dealing with municipal government to be able to continue forward and also for the private sector. Information is available through 1Berkshire, the Small Business Administration, and Congressman Neal's office. He reported that he is participating with the Regional Command Center and conference calls and getting daily updates from them and Berkshire Medical Center, as well as neighboring communities. *Member Nowak* inquired about the status of the HVAC project at Memorial School. An update will be provided. The project workers are spread out through the building and the Building Commissioner is regularly checking on it. *Member Nowak* asked for the Town to look at all of the projects that are going on and to start prioritizing them. He noted that there are so many things going on at a time that the Town needs to take a pause, look at the projects and see how they are progressing for the community. *Town Administrator Green* noted there is limited staff and six or more projects going on at the same time. The Town is not looking beyond what is already underway, but is looking to do them well and go forward from there. *Vice Chairman Bush* inquired whether the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Project timeline is still the same since the COVID-19 situation. It was noted that the timeline is dynamic but could expedite with the good weather. A periodic check-in with MassDOT District 1 takes place and if it is being mobilized in this area the Town will be told. It is unclear whether the Route 8 and Crotteau Street paving projects will be affected and Community Development is sending out a second mailing to residents.

Contracts have been signed for Route 8 and it is still moving ahead but has not gone out to bid yet. The Russell Field project is still on course, but it is not clear how far long it is or whether it is still on schedule. Concern was expressed about putting the brakes on projects because they take so many years to get going. It was suggested to have this at a future workshop. It was explained that the timing of the projects is frequently at the mercy of the funding from the state, without which the Town would not be able to do them. It was noted that the larger projects such as Route 8 and the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Extension take years to develop and are done thanks to the hard work of Town Government, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Town Administrator. It was explained that the announced bag tags can still be purchased from the Town Treasurer via mail or through the drop box in front of Town Hall and checks should be made payable to the Town of Adams in the amount of the stickers. Residents should include the name of Transfer Station sticker holder, and five bag tags cost \$6. Residents with questions should contact the Town Treasurer between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. from Monday through Thursday at extension 177.

Town Counsel: *Town Counsel St. John III was not present.*

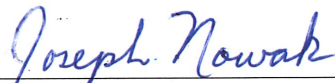
SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS: *Vice Chairman Bush* advised he had a teleconference with Linda Cernik regarding the transfer station, Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District costs and bidding on the waste company. He noted that another meeting with the full board is expected in a couple of weeks. He explained that the cost will go up with Casella taking over and they are looking at grinding glass into a viable product that can be sold. The Town could rent or purchase a grinder but renting is recommended and storing it for sale. *Member Blanchard* inquired whether Council on Aging staff or volunteers are cold calling people about tax preparation. It was noted that there are people are doing taxes but it was not clear whether this service was shut down by COVID-19. It was noted that the Council on Aging has been making wellness calls for elders in the community and to check if they need meals. *Member Duval* advised that tomorrow Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is having a Subcommittee Meeting. An inquiry was made about what the status was of the Council on Aging and Town Clerk assistance of the elderly with the Federal Census. It was noted that if citizens have trouble doing the Census from home they can call the Town Clerk's office, who will put in the information for the constituent. A number of public information meetings were cancelled and a suggestion was made to film the informational session with Northern Berkshire Community Television but it was not clear whether that happened or not.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: *Member Nowak* thanked everyone on front line of the COVID-19 virus mitigation. Hospitals and health care facilities are running short on protective gear, and requests everyone work together to lessen the burden. *Vice Chairman Bush* advised the public that the guidelines for COVID-19 are to stay away from people, wash your hands, and don't touch your face. He advised that the Banners for Fallen Heroes project is going strong and if anyone wishes to have someone included to call Deb Dunlap at the Town Administrator's Office, (413) 743-8333 x170. *Member Duval* thanked Chairman Hoyt and Town Administrator Green for their work on COVID-19 as this crisis was unforeseen. He thanked Town employees for keeping the Town of Adams running. Senators Markey and Hinds, Representatives Farley-Bouvier and Barrett were thanked for their work behind the letter received on March 30th which notified the Town that WWLP was brought back to the local cable system. He noted how important it is for Adams citizens to have Massachusetts local news in the Berkshires and it can be found on Springfield Station WWLP Channel 22, Channel 14 or Northern Berkshire Community Television Channel 1204. *Chairman Hoyt* advised the Mobile Food Bank will be held on Tuesday, April 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and information will be provided by the Council on Aging on both Facebook and the Town's website.

Citizens with questions about the Food Bank or the bag lunch program are asked to call 743-8333. She noted that everyone will be affected by COVID-19 in some way, and asked everyone to make sure they are doing their part with social distancing.

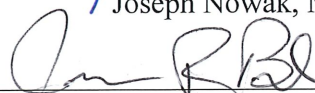
ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Vice Chairman Bush to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Nowak. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Bush, Members Duval, Nowak and Blanchard. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm*

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



Joseph Nowak, Member

John Duval, Member



James Bush, Vice Chairman

Richard Blanchard, Member



Christine Hoyt, Chairman