

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES

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TOWN OF ADAMS MASS.

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at the Town Hall Board of Selectmen Room. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Duval. Present from the Board of Selectmen were Chairman Duval, Vice Chairman Hoyt, Members Blanchard, Nowak and Rosenberg. Also present were Town Administrator Green, Town Counsel St. John III, George LeMaitre, Bill Riley, Francie-Anne Riley of the Adams Arts Advisory Board (AAAB), Board of Health Chairman Rhoads, Michael Tatro of National Grid, Administrative Assistant Dunlap, and Peter Gentile from NBCTC.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes for the *September 22, 2021 and September 29, 2021 Workshops* were submitted for approval. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to waive reading and approve the minutes for the September 22, 2021 Workshop as submitted, second by Member Rosenberg. Abstention by Member Blanchard. Voted in favor were Chairman Duval, Vice Chairman Hoyt, Members Nowak and Rosenberg. Motion passed. Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to waive reading and approve the minutes for the September 29, 2021 Workshop as submitted, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

PUBLIC COMMENT: *There were no public comments.*

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Annual Town Leaf Pickup, November 1 – 30, 2021. It was reviewed that annually the Department of Public Works picks up leaves from town-owned trees throughout the month of November. Citizens with town trees are asked to rake their leaves to the tree belt and crews will be assigned throughout the month to pick them up.

Vacancy on Parks Commission. *Town Administrator Green* announced that Scott Tolmach had to resign from the Parks Commission due to reassignment from his permanent employment. He explained that the Parks Commission is elected and the Board needs to request submissions of interest to serve for the balance of the term until election. This will likely be on a November Agenda.

Book Donation Box at the Transfer Station: *Board of Health Chairman Rhoads* provided a flyer from Donation Books to harvest unwanted books to keep them out of the landfill. He reviewed their business model to resell or donate to charities, or reuse books for insulation. He advised they target communities without free book, donation programs or libraries. There are different agreements, and Massachusetts is a Home Rule state, so each municipality has different needs and desires. He noted that they are willing to work with the community regarding book disposal and put a donation bin at the transfer station, library or other location with a 4' x 4' concrete pad. The Library is willing to give

volunteers a key to go through the box and manage it, and this gives the Library a socially acceptable way to dispose of books. He advised that he had communicated with the Library Director and she is willing to consider a donation box, but she expressed concerns about confusion when people return library books. He added that she stated she does not want the box at the Library. He noted the pros and cons, disposal costs, and tonnage to be taken away. It was explained that there are overstocks of books that cannot be sold and they can be made into insulation. He pointed out that traffic at the Transfer Station and the expense are issues that could be addressed with robust signage, and figuring out the cost. He asked the Board to consider it and let him know what the next steps are.

PUBLIC HEARING

National Grid Petition to Install a Pole on Burlingame Hill Road, 7:10 p.m.

Motion made by Member Blanchard to go into the public hearing, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

Michael Tatro of National Grid advised that a customer changed their house and National Grid will put a service pole on edge of the road to serve the customer. The original pole will not be removed, and the service line will tap off that pole to a service pole on same side of house, and go underground. He explained that a new addition is being built which will be the attachment location. It was clarified that sometimes National Grid prefers to go with overhead lines and a secondary service to the customer but if they prefer an underground line it will be done. Past situations where National Grid had expressed they would not put lines underground were reviewed briefly. It was explained that the line was likely a primary line and as the customer owns the secondary line it is up to them. It was clarified this request is for permission to put the pole on public property and once this is in place National Grid can put in underground lines to the house. When an easement is written they can do another attachment or underground line for future use. It was explained that this would not be on any other piece of map, but just for this pole. A request was made to make it clear of snow load and clearing and National Grid was asked to touch base with the DPW. *Mr. Tatro* advised it will be up a five-foot bank, so it will be clear. The public was asked for comments or questions, and none were given. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to come out of public hearing, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed. Motion made by Member Blanchard to approve the petition for placement of a pole by National Grid on Town-owned property on Burlingame hill Road, Lot #119, Pole 12-1, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous, motion passed.***

Book Donation Box at the Transfer Station: This topic was continued after the public hearing. *Dr. Rhoads* asked again what steps need to be taken and noted he would do more research. *Member Rosenberg* inquired what the expected volume would be, and it was noted that it was not clear and there is no requirement on volume. It was pointed out that if the program is doing well it can be taken away as there is not an iron clad agreement. An inquiry was made about who will manage it from the Town side, and *Dr. Rhoads* noted it was not clear. *Dr. Rhoads* advised that after speaking with Library Director Jayko, it was expressed that the Library Returns box is abused and takes a number of volunteers. He explained that he will have to talk to the Friends of the Library and rely on volunteers to assist. It was pointed out that if use is unmanageable it can be taken away. A request was made for this topic to be moved to a workshop in the future for more discussion and context. Items to be addressed were listed as being the cost for installation, the concrete pad, who pours it if it is not already there, whether this is a program requested by Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District (NBSWMD) and if so, if a representative would attend. Additionally, feedback from the Friends of the Library and Berkshire United Way on their initiatives, and also from the DPW on

where it would be located and how it would affect traffic flow was requested. Information was requested on whether Discover Books make a profit and if there are other vendors that would be less costly. *Dr. Rhoads* advised that Linda Cernik is the Director of the NBSWMD and does not do specific advocacy for the Town but just relays the information. He noted that she was the impetus, via a complaint from Lanesborough that they were throwing away books in their waste stream. She got the announcement from Discover Books and passed it on to the entire district. He reported that he spoke with the Transfer Station Supervisor in Plainfield who had enlisted one donation box and was not happy with it, so it was switched to Discover Books. He advised that other than the concrete pad there is no cost to the Town as Discover Books makes money on what they get. *Member Blanchard* inquired when the bin would be cleared out, and whether it was during regular business hours. *Dr. Rhoads* advised his assumption is they work with the Towns and as our Transfer Station is open Wednesdays and Saturdays they will have to agree on when they will show up. It was indicated that they would show up every two weeks. Discover Books would let the Library know when and the Library would have to attend the opening when the schedule works. *Member Nowak* inquired whether there are other towns in Berkshire County with this vendor, and *Dr. Rhoads* advised he shared that question. He knew of one in Vermont and one in Plainfield. He noted that there are sites around New England and Discover Books are from either New Hampshire or Vermont. *Member Nowak* asked to get input from those use Discover Books, and expressed concern about the company making a profit from the donated books. It was pointed out that this is their business model. *Dr. Rhoads* advised that the alternative is books staying on a shelf unused or going into the landfill and either way something is lost and the question is how to minimize what is lost in resources. *Chairman Duval* stated addressing the questions and pros and cons at a workshop was advised. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to table this item, second by Vice Chairman Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Presentation by the Adams Arts Advisory Board regarding Creating a Cultural District in Adams: *Bill Riley*, Chair of the Adams Arts Advisory Board (AAAB), explained establishment of the AAAB in August 2015 by former Town Administrator Mazzucco to develop an arts initiative and a festival event. He advised the Board created a Fairy Festival and mural projects, but Covid-19 stopped everything. Some Board Members had health problems and Phil Sellars passed away. He explained that the AAAB is interested in establishing an organizational structure between the public and the Town for the arts and in managing ongoing duties for a functional cultural district. *George LeMaitre*, Treasurer of the AAAB advised he has done research on the Cultural District concept, governed by the State Cultural Council, which has a prescribed set of requirements to create a District or be rejected. He explained that he believes the AAAB meets the standards to become a Cultural District. He was requested by the AAAB to assist the Town in applying to become a Cultural District, which will add an additional layer of advertising for the Town and attract artist and cultural businesses. He noted that cultural businesses are a vital part of the community which greatly enhance the growing interest in the town. He explained the process to create a Cultural District is long, and can take up to a year as it is heavily regulated by the state. It was emphasized that the Town has total control of the process, and at no time could the AAAB represent the Town since the Town releases the application to the state. The request was for Board approval for the AAAB to act as the managing agent to start the application process to create a Cultural District. Once approved, a management team is formed and provides evidence of qualification with resources and assets. They would then meet with the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen and the Arts community. *Town Administrator Green* advised that although the Town of Adams did not intend the AAAB to have a budget or money, they organized themselves as a 501(C)3 and have funds they raised through their own efforts. They are not asking for funds from the Town and Community Development Director Coughlin is

willing to provide staff support as it is a big project to take on. It was noted that it comes before the Board of Selectmen because it is a policy decision and because there are a lot of projects in progress through Community Development, the AAAB is willing to do as much as possible on this. It was explained that every five years the Cultural District must be recertified so it stays in place. A map is required to represent where the Cultural District lies. A downtown development on Park and Summer Streets and provision for satellite locations is what is being considered for the Cultural District. The Susan B. Anthony Museum is not within walkable distance but could be a satellite because it contributes to the Cultural District. Other locations that supplement the Cultural District and can be adjusted on the map as well. An inquiry was made regarding what impact the overlay district in the main town area, would have on people wanting to come in. The parameters of the Cultural District were reviewed and concern was expressed about the number of employees in town being sparse in number. A question was raised about whether the Cultural District in the downtown and summer street areas would limit small businesses coming in that are not art related. It was explained that New York and SoHo both had that problem and as the art community is a transitional community which holds space until other businesses move in. *Yina Moore* advised the community includes restaurant and food destinations, which can fall into the creative culinary arts category. The past fabrication and industry businesses, plus the scenic and framework shops can also fold under cultural district umbrella. Looking at visual and performing arts and spoken words, as well as more traditional businesses, can take on a new dimension to attract tourists and increase synergy to create more jobs. *Member Nowak* advised that once the area is considered a Cultural District it can get funds and grants. He expressed concern about the future being hooked on cultural artists and venues because it failed in North Adams. It was clarified that the designation does not require a business to be one of the arts or cultural. The town can have any business but it creates an incentive to come here. There would be no conflict with economic business in town and the cultural district. It was noted that art and cultural venues only have a few people run them. Members of the AAAB were praised for being handy, hard-working and fostering a creative atmosphere which will hopefully invite creative businesses into the downtown space. The desire to support the history of the town was expressed and a map was created on the Train Station because it is a piece of art and highlights the heritage of this community. It was given as an example of the combination of arts and culture working together. It was clarified that the Adams Arts Advisory Board Members are appointed and ready to go forward after being dormant for a while. It was explained this would be a good Workshop topic to have Community Development Director Coughlin present but it shouldn't stop work going forward on it. *Vice Chair Hoyt* noted that the Cultural Council hosted art week and received a lot of attention and exposure on what was done. She expressed concern about staff time as the Town would be the applicant and was pleased to hear the Community Development Director has been networking on it. She suggested contacting Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as they helped other parties with their applications. *Mr. LeMaitre* advised he is part of the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP) and had access to some grants. He expressed willingness to apply for grant money for the Community Development Director's service to rezone and write an overlay for the District. *Vice Chairman Hoyt* noted that when putting together a map, Adams has a trail that goes through the connecting streets such as Grove Street, and asked for consideration to have it connected with the map. It is a public process and anyone that has a stake in the process is notified so if problems arise they can be addressed to be sure nothing done hurts any part of the community. Every step has to be approved by the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen and the state. *Member Rosenberg* advised that it has been shown in parts of country industrial businesses went to China, overseas and down south. Artists were approached to create places as people go where the arts are. He expressed his support

and noted arts are critical to this community. *Member Nowak* touched on the required steps before the application begins and it was noted that it is a long process and everyone is volunteering time to support the process. The AAAB was asked to provide updates to keep the Board up to date. It was noted that this would be a good topic for an Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting. The process was briefly outlined. ***Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt for the Town to enter into creating a Cultural District in Adams; second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*** *Town Administrator Green* asked for the AAAB to be named as a third party for oversight and management of the Cultural District operations to include reporting requirements, collection and compiling of data and providing it to the state. ***Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to name AAAB to serve as a third party as the Town's Agent through the process of creating a Cultural District in Adams, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator: *Town Administrator Green* thanked AAAB for their presence during Arts Week. He thanked ProAdams for their work to provide Ramblefest, which was well attended. He reported there was a Roundtable Meeting on Monday of groups that are working within their own sphere of interest to move the Town forward, with Carol Cushenette at the helm. He reported open positions in Town being the Council on Aging Director, two Wastewater Treatment Plant positions, one DPW Operator 1 position, a Community Development Administrative Assistant and a full-time Police Officer. The Town web page lists the open positions. He advised that Commercial Street construction is still going forward and winding down for the season. The surface now in place is not the final surface but has been put down to manage the winter season. The contractor will come back for final touches. He requested citizens provide help regarding vandalism at Valley Street and Russel Fields. He noted the Town put forth substantial money to renovate and make the fields available and because of the vandalism may be forced to lock them up to avoid vandalism. He requested if anyone sees something to call 911 or 743-1212 on behalf of Police Chief Kelley. *Chairman Duval* noted that the Greylock Glen developer bids that were due tomorrow have been pushed out two weeks to provide more time to allow the Town to work on questions received on it.

Town Counsel: *Town Counsel St. John III* advised that received and reviewed an appeal to the Massachusetts Appeal Court from a decision of the Appellate Tax Board by a local property owner. He advised he is awaiting the appellant's brief. He reported he received a request to check on the ownership of a dilapidated property in Adams and provided a response to the Board of Health. He reported he is currently studying the decision rendered by a Superior Court judge in the Adams Fire District case to determine its impact on the Town of Adams. He advised he is working with Mr. Ransford's attorney regarding the transfer of the 26 Commercial Street parcel to the Town. He noted that he expects the Town to close on this transfer in early November. He also reported he attended today's Board of Health meeting. *Town Administrator Green* advised that Community Development Special Projects Coordinator Cesan identified most of funding to effectuate the Town's vision on the 26 Commercial Street acquisition.

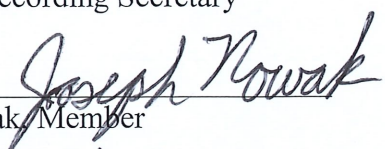
SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS: *Member Nowak* reported that there was another meeting held by the Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership (MTWP) Executive Board and they are working with Williams College students to put a Forestry Center on the Route 2 corridor. Work is being done with the Williams College students to determine the location predicated on getting funds. They will be working with students from MCLA as part of the partnership as well. They met with Representatives regarding the pilot program and concern was expressed about filing bills to get a more equitable formula for conservation restrictions, or 61A, to allow for timbering on properties. He

advised that similar to the last program, information on ecotourism programs is forthcoming once specifics are known. *Vice Chair Hoyt* reported that the Personnel Sub-committee met last week and reviewed vacancies, looked at the job description for the Council on Aging Director and places to post the job. They have begun looking at the personnel handbook and there will be more updates to come. *Member Rosenberg* reiterated that the Personnel Sub-committee met. *Chairman Duval* reported that a Public Safety Sub-committee meeting took place and Chief will come to the Board soon with a new program the Board indicated they would like to see in the community. The Operational Command Center was discussed, as well as Emergency Management. The sub-committee will meet again to discuss leadership in Emergency Management. He noted that regarding state-owned land, on behalf of the Town the state owns 5,108 acres valued at \$7,398,100 or \$148 per acre, and with the FY21 tax rate the pilot program provided the community \$72,490. Adams is one of many communities with the study being done, and he noted the Town should have received \$94,577 for this program. There are individuals fighting this and the Town is putting support behind it. He explained that when the state purchases farm land from land owners and are supposed to protect it, it is getting short-changed from the state. *Town Administrator Green* advised with the proposed tax revenue that could be earned, the Town could add DPW or Parks and Grounds staff to be assigned to the Greylock Glen to maintain it. He noted the Town doesn't have the labor to do maintenance and the lost revenue could be put toward that. *Chairman Duval* advised that Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) supports many organizations and we need to fight to get the money we deserve. It was clarified that the information comes in on the Cherry Sheet.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: *Vice Chair Hoyt* announced that tomorrow there is Coffee in Adams Theater, which is indoors given the cooler temperatures at 7:30 a.m. She thanked the organizers and sponsors. She noted that she attended a BRPC discussion to review information from state auditors for infrastructure studies. She advised it was well attended by the county and represented by Community Development Director Coughlin and Town Administrator Green. She reported she attended the Women Elected Municipal Official conference as well. *Member Blanchard* acknowledge that a huge tree came down and blocked Orchard Street in a recent storm and within two hours the tree was completely gone and the street was swept. He praised the DPW and Police Department on their response. *Member Nowak* echoed concern about vandalism and noted there has been a lot of tagging. He reiterated to the public if they see someone doing something to notify the police right away so they can be caught and made an example of. He noted that when coming into the front and back of Town Hall he would like to see the marble stairs fixed, and the entrances with fresh paint to brighten up the building. *Town Administrator Green* advised the back stairs were recently repaired and the back of the building power washed in anticipation of obtaining a painting quote. Stairs need repair and engineering in the Capital Budget. *Member Nowak* advised this is the last public meeting before Halloween and requested everyone be very careful of youngsters. Trick-or-Treat hours are 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. He noted that regarding the pilot program previously mentioned, the Town loses revenue from it, but a lot of property the state has bought over the years has been unbuildable and is protecting carbon sequestration. The most recent information about land purchased was from a report a week ago. It was explained that upcoming workshop topics include the Town Hall elevator shaft that has work to be done, the Winter Parking Ban, and a presentation from *Indus* for crack sealing and non-traditional techniques for road preservation. Additionally, information will be provided for a road paver for the DPW to extend Chapter 90 money with road maintenance issues in-house.

ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.*

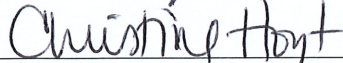
Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary



Joseph Nowak, Member



Howard Rosenberg, Member



Christine Hoyt, Vice Chair



Richard Blanchard, Member



John Duval, Chair