



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING  
8 PARK STREET

Wednesday, January 19, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES

**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 Vice Chair Hoyt, Members Nowak and Rosenberg. *Member Blanchard was absent.* Also present were Town Administrator Green, Town Counsel St. John III, Dick Kleiner, Administrative Assistant Dunlap, Brian Rhodes from iBerkshires, and Peter Gentile from NBCTC.

*The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the *December 15, 2021* were submitted for approval. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to waive reading and approve the minutes for the December 15, 2021 Meeting as submitted, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ratification of DPW Skilled Laborer:** *Adam Jangrow.* Chairman Duval read aloud the letter from Town Administrator Green recommending ratification of Adam Jangrow. *Town Administrator Green noted* he attempted to hire for the DPW Maintenance Technician, Operator I position, but the CDL requirement kept applicants from applying. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to ratify the appointment of Adam Jangrow to the DPW Skilled Laborer position at the D02, Step 4 rate of \$18.95 per hour, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Ratification of Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator I:** *Peter Celentano.* Chairman Duval read aloud the letter from Town Administrator Green recommending ratification of Peter Celentano. It was noted that there were three vacancies at the plant, and the Town is fortunate to have someone with this level of experience for the position. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to ratify the appointment of Peter Celentano to the WWTP Operator 1 position at the D12, Step 1 rate of \$19.04 per hour, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Ratification of COA Administrative Assistant:** *Kathryn Bellizzi.* Chairman Duval read aloud the letter from Town Administrator Green recommending ratification of Kathryn Bellizzi. Council on Aging Director Fontaine expressed excitement to have Ms. Bellizzi start, and noted she brings warmth and energy to every room she is in. The Council on Aging will be fully staffed with her on board. Vice Chair Hoyt and Member Rosenberg thanked Ms. Bellizzi for helping with the transition and noted her upbeat attitude is so important to get out of fear and malaise of Covid. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to ratify the appointment of Kathryn Bellizzi to the Council on Aging Administrative Assistant position at the Grade 5, Step 3 rate of \$18.19 per hour, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Ratification of Emergency Management Director:** *Amalio Jusino.* *Chairman Duval* read aloud the letter from Town Administrator Green recommending ratification of Amalio Jusino. *Town Administrator Green* noted that historically both positions of Forest Wardens Chief and Emergency Management Director were held by one person, who had been thrust into a health pandemic and other emergencies. He expressed pride in Chief Kleiner, the two gentlemen filling the positions, and the structure of emergency services. He noted Chief Kleiner has served 29 years in these positions, and Chief Kleiner was presented with a Public Service Award for his time served in both positions. *Board Members* thanked Chief Kleiner for putting his heart and soul into Town of Adams and with the Forest Wardens in providing service to the community. It was emphasized that there were numerous examples of his actions, as a lifelong resident of the community, and those of the Forest Wardens under his leadership to support the Town through emergency declarations, providing food, support, parades, supporting events and mutual aid to other communities. It was pointed out that the Forest Wardens are volunteers and have operated as a tight-knit group under his oversight. Acknowledgement was given to Chief Kleiner for his work through the pandemic, where his preparedness and providing necessary protective equipment and team members for vaccination clinics took place despite various weather conditions and challenges. Chief Kleiner was described as being fully committed to the town, cordial and polite, informative and willing to provide education to others. A deep appreciation was expressed for his length of term, service, and core values. It was explained that Chief Kleiner has endorsed both individuals that were taking on the leadership roles in his wake, and he will remain in a consulting position. *Town Administrator Green* added that in addition to forest fires, the position has become more paperwork, grant and planning oriented which has required active participation in regional services. He noted there have been some significant responses lately which have been required to be regional but this will not dilute the services to Adams. *Chairman Duval* read aloud the letter from Town Administrator Green requesting the ratification of Amalio Jusino to the position of Emergency Management Director. It was explained this is not a fulltime position, but volunteer with a small stipend, and critical to the emergency response team. *Member Nowak* thanked Mr. Jusino for stepping forward into such a very important position for just a stipend. He noted that climate change will likely bring in more storms and unnatural weather phenomena which will impact the area and this is a very important position to manage it. It was pointed out that in addition to natural disasters, other situations require specialized planning, such as the Capital Officer Evans that was put to rest locally and had extensive planning and response to the activities as well as to provide protection to the family. *Vice Chair Hoyt* noted important dates during the pandemic that required Mr. Jusino's specialized services to provide staffing of the Emergency Operations Center, which then became the model for the state. She reported he was the lead of the REPC and participated on the calls that took place for pandemic reporting and planning. She pointed out that Mr. Jusino was the one that called Adams and formed a meeting of emergency personnel at the beginning of the pandemic. She emphasized that he stepped up and provided training and information to the Police Department, and went to the Council on Aging to train on how to properly clean the facility and vans between programs. *Chairman Duval* noted that BRPC had a meeting and the highest award presented is the Charles Cusic award and Mr. Jusino was presented one of the three awards that were given to the south, central and north counties for the vaccine collaboratives. It was stated that he had been recently hired by Williams College as their Emergency Management Director as well. ***Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to ratify the appointment of Amalio Jusino to the Emergency Management Director position, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

**Ratification of Forest Warden Chief Position:** *Griffin Willette.* *Chairman Duval* read aloud the letter from Chief Kleiner recommending ratification of Griffin Willette to the position of Forest Warden Chief. *Town Administrator Green* explained the Forest Wardens have replaced two major pieces of equipment in recent times, and noted that the Forest Wardens are an essential part of public safety and volunteer. It was emphasized that the Forest Wardens provide a substantial value to the town. Mr. Willette was thanked for being part of the emergency team and examples were given of his personal efforts toward citizen safety.

He was described as being dedicated, knowledgeable and a great addition to Town leadership. He was acknowledged for helping put on the birthday drive around town with other emergency services during the pandemic, as well as supporting parades and other events. It was pointed out that climate change will become more intense and dangerous, requiring additional training and the Forest Wardens' ATV will be available to support local towns in need as well. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to ratify the appointment of Griffin Willette to the Forest Warden Chief position, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Presentation by Wing Well Group for 44 Spring Street:** *Eric Cromwell, Sacha Wing.* Wing Well Group was introduced. Eric Cromwell explained 44 Spring Street is being looked at for cannabis cultivation. He reviewed another location in Palmer with an overview of what they are doing there, and outlined the proposed operation in Adams. He noted it is B2 Zoning, which allows retail, cultivation, and manufacturing possibilities. He pointed out that there are ancillary buildings in that area and the landlord is open to development. A surveyor will be going out there in the next few weeks, and the plan is to keep the existing storefront and tenants. The store front will allow more space for staging and drying so not everything will be on the shelves for retail. He explained that three licenses will be needed from the state to do this. The cultivation space and support structures were described, and it was pointed out that there will not be greenhouses, as it will not be open to the air, but instead will have solid walls. The top will be a domed glass structure, and it will draw less electricity as it is using the sun. This gives it an energy advantage and a natural way to manage the plant. The manufacturing process and storage were reviewed, as well as the extraction of removing terpenes. He addressed odor concerns and pointed out that in concentration it is overpowering. Odor mitigation has been investigated and he noted industrial ambient air ozone generators, aerosol products, are used in California to grab scent molecules and drop them to the ground. The facilities will not be open to outside air. It was explained that Wing Well Group is going through the Cannabis Control Commission process and the next step is to hold a public outreach meeting and enter into a community host agreement very similar to their Palmer agreement. It will then go before the Planning Board the Board of Selectmen will be updated. *Mr. Cromwell* explained the CCC application is accepted and approved, and they have been cleared to start. This will be the only retail site, though there will be Cultivation and Manufacturing licenses at both locations. He noted that the Palmer focus is on edibles and here is the greenhouse and grow center. The two locations will work together. *Member Nowak* noted concern that past interested parties have been stalled in the industry, and inquired about there being a saturation point. There is no known priority list by CCC so no major problems are expected. An inquiry was made about using a solar array, and this was noted as being considered. Since blackout curtains will be used, lighting within the building will be needed to supplement. Part of the CCC application is to address where renewable energy can be implemented, and it was noted that they would be on top of identified support structures and other areas to utilize the sun as much as possible. He noted it requires a feasibility plan to implement down the road. Safety was briefly discussed and it was outlined that this will be a more secure building than a bank or pharmacy. Police will have twenty-four-hour access to cameras and the design features make sure product is not visible from the outside. He noted it tends to be a cash business, so the plan is to use a debit system. Funds are moved using a transportation company. It was explained that 3% of the gross profit would go to the town, and also provide education outreach. *Mr. Cromwell* noted if the Town has ideas regarding what can be done it is open for consideration as they wish to be partners with the town. With the CCC and town approval the business could potentially open in approximately twelve to fourteen months, but some demolition needs to be done. It is estimated that there will be over forty employees, largely in part time positions. It was reported that Berkshire Community College has a course on cannabis businesses so trained students may be available. *Mr. Cromwell* advised they will continue to work with Community Development Director Coughlin to put together a host agreement, do public outreach and fulfill the requirements of the CCC. The overall budget of the business was discussed. The business will pay real estate taxes and an impact fee.

**All Alcohol Licensed Club, Change of Officers Application Resubmission:** *Adams Lodge 1335 BPO Elks, 63 Center Street, Adams.* Vice Chair Hoyt advised that the Elks were asked to resubmit their application for Change of Officers. Town Counsel explained he asked for resubmission of vote, and recommends the Board move forward pending receipt of a proper certificate of vote. He noted the resubmission was due to a death and resignation of the Officers listed on the original Change of Officers application. *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to approve the Change of Officers Application for Adams Lodge 1335 BPO Elks, address, pending receipt of a certificate of vote, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Dissolution of Memorial Building Sub-Committee.** Chairman Duval advised the Memorial School Sub-Committee was formed eight years ago to determine what to do with the building, which was not being used. He explained there has been a lot of discussion over the years on this subject, and the Sub-Committee worked with Donna Cesan and her vision to determine the development of the structure. He noted that the public will be able to use a portion of the building including the gymnasium for sports groups, and the auditorium to use for town meetings, as well as other rooms and spaces in the building. He pointed out the suggestion to move the Council on Aging over to the building as they are continuing to grow and to include other communities so they will need more space. Housing will be created in the classroom wing and the Town identified a developer over the last few months that is hoped to sign and get moving on building new apartments and housing for the community. He explained it is now time to put an end to the subcommittee, and another subcommittee will now identify the rules to use the building, and to create oversight and maintenance of that part of the building. He noted other housing areas in the community are being worked out with other mill buildings being looked at for potential conversion. In the future a housing subcommittee may be identified for future projects. He advised that Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has a meeting tomorrow regarding housing and working with 1Berkshire to prepare a regional housing strategy for potential grants. He noted that this and the Greylock Glen are the most important subcommittees. He pointed out that the East Street property and 5 and 7 Hoosac Buildings may move in this direction. Oversight and building usage will move over to the Public Works - Facilities Sub-Committee. Chairman Duval, Member Blanchard and Community Development Special Projects Coordinator Cesan were thanked for their work on the sub-committee. *Member Nowak* requested voting to be moved to the Memorial Building gymnasium instead of at the DPW for safety reasons. He noted that he had spoken with Community Development Special Projects Coordinator Cesan and the former Sebastino Garage may be a good auxiliary parking lot for safety. *Chairman Duval* advised that over the next few months the Council on Aging will be moving over to the Memorial Building and the public will have access to use the building in late spring. Interior updates are taking place currently. Brief discussion took place about what the plans will be for the Visitors Center building that will be vacated by the Council on Aging. The Town Administrator was asked to reach out and investigate possible businesses or offices to rent out parts of the building to get a revenue stream for that building, but the Thunderbolt Museum will remain. *Motion made by Member Nowak to dissolve the Memorial Building Sub-Committee, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

**Approval of General Government Review Committee Members:** *Tim Burdick, Carrie Burnett, Jonathan Butler, Carol Cushenette, Virginia Duval, Jeff Grandchamp, Esq., George Haddad, Don Sommer, Leah Thompson.* Town Administrator Green advised the Town has been discussing having a review of the Special Acts that make up the Town Charter, which was last done 1984. He noted that in September, 2020, Town Meeting authorized \$20,000 to hire a consultant to walk the Town through the foundational documents. The consultant is on board, and looked at the public process. The Town Administrator put together a list of up to nine names to comprise a well-rounded committee for Board of Selectmen approval. If approved, they will begin to work with the consultant and move forward to modernize how government business is done in Adams. It was noted that next week the Consultant will call in after the Board identifies the goals of the committee and he will begin to work on the process.

*Member Nowak* expressed disappointment that not all Board Members put in names for consideration as many of the same people guide the direction of the town. He pointed out that every one of the people on the list are respected, but he felt consideration should be given to be more inclusive and bring other people in. He emphasized that the list of people provided are knowledgeable and will do a great job, he recognized that many of the selected names were people who have been on selection committees. *Chairman Duval* advised he reviewed the list and added two individuals. He noted this duty is a lengthy process, and thanked everyone on the list who are willing to serve. He explained the Town is looking for government experience as this is a government document and committee members need to work well together with experience and skills. Discussion took place on the selection process. It was pointed out that this is important work and the Town wants the work to be done as soon as possible. It was emphasized that the list was of very qualified, motivated and intelligent people. ***Motion made by Member Nowak to approve the General Government Review Committee Members list as Tim Burdick, Carrie Burnett, Jonathan Butler, Carol Cushenette, Virginia Duval, Jeff Grandchamp, Esq., George Haddad, Don Sommer, and Leah Thompson; second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*** The Town Administrator's letter recommending the list of committee members was read aloud.

**Discussion and Review of Louison House Funding Request:** *Chairman Duval* reported he was in one discussion regarding this request, which came originally as an issue with a license for Mt. Royal Inn. He reported that Kathy Keeser was looking into housing homeless individuals from Adams, North Adams and Williamstown, and the funding she normally receives was not guaranteed. He noted she reported having a shortfall that she expected the state would provide, but the funding has not been announced yet. He explained that because of the pandemic, more homelessness has been created and her intention was to house them at the Mount Royal Inn for the three communities. She reached out to the North Adams Mayor and to the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen in Adams for ARPA funds to fill the funding gap. Williamstown is providing \$10,000, and North Adams is providing \$50,000 to help her toward her goal. An inquiry was made whether this was possible and legal to be done. *Town Administrator Green* advised he shared the same concerns. He explained that Louison House has used Mount Royal Inn before for winter overflow housing, which indicated genuine licensing and permitting concerns with Mt. Royal Inn regarding temporary winter housing without proper licensing. It was noted that the sudden funding request was a surprise. Funds are supposed to be ARPA funds, at about \$2.3 Million and half of the funds have been allocated so far. He noted the clean and straight forward use for the funds was identified for infrastructure, which is a significant need. Research into ARPA indicates the funds can be for this type of usage, but chronic homelessness is not necessarily Covid-related. He explained the Town has to be judicious in how funds are used for our needs and also from a future auditing standpoint. He pointed out that other funds have had restrictive use and have had to be sent back. There is no clear answer on how a determination is done of who has the most need. *Vice Chair Hoyt* asked to table this discussion until Kathy Keeser can be present to answer questions. *Chairman Duval* pointed out Adams would be the host community and there is a cost to public service. ***Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to table this discussion, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

**Town Administrator:** *Town Administrator Green* thanked the Police Department, which is down three officers, and also thanked the DPW for their operation in the last storm despite being down two positions; one vacancy and one on vacation. He thanked the residents for complying with the storm emergency and for their assistance. He reported that the Town was depleted of Covid test kits very quickly and recommended to follow the Board of Health proceedings on this topic. He noted that all Town buildings are open, fully staffed, have mask requirements, and staff remains healthy. *Member Nowak* reported that infrastructure money is going to be released for bridges in Massachusetts, and inquired if Adams has any that need to be upgraded or replaced. It was reported that they all passed with fair or good conditions.

Community Development Director Coughlin is researching this and will try to capture every dollar possible. *Member Nowak* inquired about the status of the Jordan Street Culvert, and it was noted that FEMA and MEMA are still doing more bureaucratic work. It is moving ahead but not complete. The residents at Davis Street were thanked for their patience and it was reported that the bulk of the work is complete, just the pavement to be done. Flooding remediation work will move to Fisk Brook to be looked at next. *Chairman Duval* advised that the BRPC MPO group and DOT federal funding received will go through the MPO process for distribution. He noted the TIP is being looked at for the next four years.

**Town Counsel:** *Town Counsel St. John III* reported he has reviewed and acted upon several items for the Assessor regarding an appeal from the Appellate Tax Board by a private citizen. He reviewed and commented upon documents submitted to him by the Code Enforcement Officer concerning a potential receivership. He reviewed and commented upon a re-submission of Change of Officers documents by the Elks. He reviewed and commented upon a proposed application for an all alcoholic beverages license. He attended a meeting with Town Hall staff. He also attended a hearing on the Foster v. Board of Health case in Superior Court and is awaiting a formal decision on the matters heard.

**SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:** *Member Nowak* reported he attended the Adams Arts Advisory Board meeting regarding the Cultural District. He noted this will change the downtown in a positive way. There will be fundraising efforts for Yina Moore, led by Dave Bissaillon to help her along. He reported there was a virtual Meeting of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Executive Committee, and discussion centered on updating the plan and trying to work to get the Federal Government on board. There were discussions on representative roles in Massachusetts. *Vice Chair Hoyt* reported there were two sub-committee meetings. The Licensing Sub-Committee reviewed the ABCC annual report for 2021 the Public Works – Facilities Sub-Committee discussed allowable uses of the Memorial Building and the facility and event request form and fee schedule for different locations. She advised that there is more work to be done. *Member Rosenberg* gave a general comment as the Board of Health Liaison that over 90% of those hospitalized for Covid had compromising conditions. He explained that 60% of people have conditions that can be changed with behavior modifications, and there needs to be more discussions on epidemiology. He pointed out that there will be another pandemic and if people don't deal with their immune systems they will be negatively affected by it. He emphasized that people must start taking responsibility for their health. He explained that the symptoms are lessened with vaccinations, but the next pandemic will take a year before a vaccination is ready. *Chairman Duval* reported there is a Berkshire Regional Planning Commission meeting tomorrow. He advised that when the precinct redistricting took place due to a reduction in population, the Town approved the redistricting, and the state also approved it. He reported he signed a letter in support of a grant for the Transfer Station, for the Recycling Dividends Program.

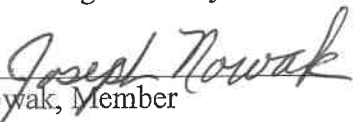
## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**Parks Commission Vacancies:** It was announced that former Parks Commission Chairman Nowicki who was appointed by the Board has resigned and Parks Commission Member Scott Tolmach has resigned and moved out of the area, leaving only three of the five members. It was noted that Ms. Ferry does not wish to put her name in for election, so the Commission will be losing a third member and will not at that point be able to meet. It was pointed out that the Parks Commission is an advisory board and manages the schedules of athletic groups on the fields. An appointment by the Board runs only until May, and if a Member wishes to serve longer they will have to pull election papers. *Member Nowak* emphasized the importance to the youth of the community in having Members on the Parks Commission.

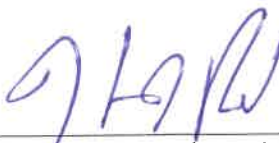
**ADJOURNMENT:** *Motion made by Vice Chair Hoyt to adjourn, second by Member Rosenberg. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary

  
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Joseph Nowak, Member

  
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Christine Hoyt, Vice Chair

  
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Howard Rosenberg, Member

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John Duval, Chair