



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET**

Thursday, April 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee held a joint workshop at the Visitors Center first floor meeting room. The Board of Selectmen workshop was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Duval. Present from the Board of Selectmen were Chairman Duval, Vice Chair Hoyt, Members Blanchard, Nowak and Rosenberg. The Finance Committee Workshop was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Finance Committee Chair Cushenette. Present from the Finance Committee were Chair Cushenette, Members *Butler*, Burnett, Duval, Foster, Johnson, Kline, Kupiec, Meczywor, Nocher, Murray and Tomkowicz. *Vice Chair Burdick and Members Melito and Mucci were absent.* Also present were Town Administrator Green, Finance Director Wojcik, Building Commissioner Garner, Police Department Chief Kelley and Officer J. Baker, Forest Warden Chief Willette, Administrative Assistant Dunlap and Brian Rhodes from iBerkshires.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *April 7, 2022 Minutes, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen.* It was explained that the minutes were just received and would be reviewed for the next meeting.

FY2023 BUDGET REVIEW

Inspection Services: *Town Administrator Green* explained there is a new department called Public Buildings / Facilities which is no longer under Public Works, and has been split out. *Building Commissioner Garner* advised that the Assistant Building Inspector position is a new position to add needed support. This position will cover smaller items, such as installation of windows, siding and doors. It is a part-time position with no benefits, to keep the position going. He noted a small increase for his position as he is taking care of the facilities and other department items on weekends and after hours. *Finance Committee Member Foster* inquired who was keeping track of the number of inspections the Building Commissioner does in a year, and it was explained that the software program provides that information. An inquiry was made on how much money the Town receives from inspections, and where the money goes. It was explained that there is a revolving fund that the money goes into for operating expenses. Finance Committee Member Kline noted that the Town makes money off of the permitting process when people improve their properties and the Town receives more money from assessment increases. It was emphasized that this is not a profit, and the Town pays expenses which go back to the community and adds value to the Town. It was explained that the permit fee pays for the cost of inspection and plan review. It was noted that Inspection Services was level-funded. *Finance Committee Member Foster* questioned the number of hours worked by staff, and the weekly and bi-weekly work hours were explained. It was explained that Weights and Measures are done by the state, and make sure such things as gas station and supermarket products scan correctly and match the prices advertised. It was noted that the Board of Health personal services budget was level-funded, and there was an increase and advertising costs and nursing fees, which go up every year.

Public Buildings / Facilities: *Building Commissioner Garner* noted that the Registry of Deeds budget is level-funded. The Town Hall budget was noted as having funding for an access control and intrusion alarm system installation, which will be the same as the system used in the Memorial School building. *Board of Selectmen Member Nowak* inquired about a camera system for the Susan B. Anthony Statue and the Train Station. It was explained that the Town is looking for a single system to cover all of the cameras, and needs to find money to do so. It was noted that a camera for the Town property would be helpful to deter damage done by the youth. It was explained that an ideal funding source would be grant funds. Research is being done on the cost of an appropriate system, which would require a power feed, a Wi-Fi network which is connected and secure, and the ability for the Police Department to view monitors or record. This would require servers, storage, and additional legal implications. The intent is to tighten up security, and it was noted that keys are also an issue. The Public Buildings and Property Maintenance budgets went up for Custodians. It was noted that one Custodian's duties are split with work at the transfer station, and the intent is to hire a person to be a dedicated transfer station attendant to be paid out of the revolving fund. Electrical costs for the Town operations was reviewed, and it was explained that the solar field generates credits which are applied toward the bills. Approximately \$140,000 is budgeted for the electrical load, and the credits are applied. If there are funds left over, they go back into the budget. The Wastewater Treatment Plant was noted as using \$5,000 per month in electricity. When the solar agreement expires the Town will no longer get the credits and the panels will have to be dismantled. Concern was expressed about the snow and weeds blocking the panels, and it was suggested that the Town look at alternative energy sources as the bills are going up. The municipal electrical aggregation program was briefly reviewed. It was noted that two vehicles in the fleet are not able to pass inspection and the Town is looking for vans to handle equipment to replace two vehicles being used for property maintenance. Currently two DPW vehicles are being used, and all that is needed is a small Ford Ranger and a small van to transport small equipment from building to building. It was explained that the Capital Projects budget is budgeted at \$100,000 as the Town desperately needs to start maintaining buildings and getting things done. It was noted as an example that the bay window at the Visitors Center is going to fall out and there has never been money in the budget to handle it. Water is coming in through the doors. Maintenance schedules were noted as another issue. The heating system at the Visitors Center was described, as well as the faults with the system. *Finance Committee Chair Cushenette* inquired whether there has been a plan put together on what needs to be done, and it was noted that it is currently being created. Town Administrator Green noted that Town Meeting authorized the acquisition of 26 Commercial Street, and he explained the plan for the full project completion. The Community Center budget for \$400 for the alarm system was noted. It was explained that a developer for 20 East Street has taken on the project and plans to keep the building and renovate it into 6 to 8 units in the existing building, plus adding townhouses and a daycare center. The Adams Memorial building budget was noted as having \$117,300 set aside just for fuel to keep it at 50 to 55 degrees. Finance Committee Member Foster inquired what the building is being used for because it is draining Town money every year. It was explained that there is a developer working on the classroom wing and the Public has been using the Memorial Building for the gymnasium. It was explained that a decision was made to make the Visitors Center into a business opportunity for rent, and there has been some interest in that. The second floor would be rental space. The first floor would continue to be the Visitors Center, and would have a connection to the Greylock Glen when the building is completed. The Memorial School gymnasium and auditorium were described as being in good shape, and elections and Town Meeting are intended to move over there. It was noted a restaurant may be able to be put in at the Visitors Center, and the Memorial Building would give the Council on Aging more space to expand their services. The heating system and roof were put in with grant money.

Town Administrator Green detailed the list of upgrades taking place to accommodate the Council on Aging move to the Memorial Building, including a move of the telephone and Wi-Fi system, plus engineering design to expand the bathrooms. It was clarified that the Town will only be heating the Town's portion of the building, and sprinkler system and accessibility work are needed. \$40,000 is in the budget for rooftop HVAC units. It was explained that the consumption rate was high because someone went in and turned up the heat, and this is the best data assessment that was possible. *Board of Selectmen Member Nowak* noted there is a great need for the basketball courts and to make the building user-friendly for the community. It was explained that the delay in opening the building for community use is due to supply chain issues for the emergency fire alarm system and thermostats that need to be protected from accidental harm. The Greylock Glen Outdoor Center budget was explained as being for furniture, fixtures and equipment as it is being built and initially set up. Finance Committee Member Foster inquired where the water meters would be placed, and it was explained that there is a pump station and Water District shed at the corner of Gould and West Streets. It was noted that the Town will maintain them. Ground breaking is tentatively scheduled for May and the project should be completed in October 2023. Investors will be needed for the next phases of the lodging, camping and amphitheater. Right now, there are active trails in use. The Adams Visitors Center was noted as being level-funded but needs previously mentioned building work. It was explained that the Police Station budget was also level-funded.

Public Safety: *Town Administrator Green* explained that there has been a change of Director for Emergency Management. Dick Kleiner had been both Emergency Management Director and Forest Warden Chief, and will now be serving as a mentor. Amalio Jusino has assumed the Emergency Management Director position, and the budget is his stipend. It was noted that this position processes paperwork, hazardous materials and is a resource coordinator. The operations budget had a number of changes and things were moved around within the two budgets when Mr. Kleiner served in both capacities in order to make things work. Griffin Willette was introduced as the new Forest Wardens Chief, and it was explained that funds were moved to where they normally get used. The Forest Wardens personal services budget is the Chief's stipend, and there are no additional costs. It was pointed out that both departments spend a lot of personal time and funds in order to execute their missions. *Police Chief Kelley* noted that the Police Department was essentially level-funded, and health insurance increased. He explained that the new unit #44 was received, and was the first car approved in four years. He advised he would be discussing the fleet needs again next year as the vehicles are used 24 hours per day and put on miles. He noted that when vehicles are old they break down and there is now an increase in the cost of parts. He reviewed the new officers, and noted that officers spend 6 months in the academy. It was explained that there are no more Reserve Officers, and they are now required to be full Officers or not allowed. He reviewed the training done by Senior Training Officer J. Baker, and K-9 Unit Kumar. He noted that the Crown Victoria vehicle in the fleet would be used for parades. He noted that Adams Hometown Market is donating another K-9 unit to the Police Department because Kumar is 11 years old and has served a long career. When the new dog comes in, it will transfer in immediately. He noted normal personnel costs, and in the Operations Budget an increase for ammunition, range supplies and tires were detailed. He noted when a new vehicle comes in, if the unit it replaces is still serviceable it is renumbered and kept running for use. Older vehicles are used as spare vehicles or academy cars. He noted the cost of putting tires and fuel in the active cars, and supply chain issues being an impact. Aladco and BDC costs have increased and raised the budget accordingly. He reviewed the high need for training, which is always evolving. *Senior Training Officer Baker* explained the need for firearms, range supplies and tasers which all have increased in cost significantly. He noted the cost of increased training requirements and the need for larger quantities of supplies as a result.

Police Reform was noted as forthcoming, and being very stringent with training as part of it. The updates made to Use of Force Classes were pointed out, and Adams Police were the first in the County to train on it. A brief review of the resources and how the Police Department is equipped took place, and it was noted that the Officers need support to be able to continue their training. It was pointed out that training and supplies are cheaper than a lawsuit. Examples were given of training with less lethal options, such as rifles with bean bangs. Forthcoming unfunded mandates were noted, and the recertification process is coming up on July 1st. Medical and psychological exams were priced at \$1,000 each per officer, and it was explained that if the Department asked for everything it needed for the upcoming Police Reform the price tag would be shocking. It was noted as unclear when it would come out but when it does the requirement is immediate. *Board of Selectmen Vice Chair Hoyt* inquired how many openings there were anticipated to be and whether the Department is funded for them. Police Department staffing was reviewed, and it was explained that when hiring there is a need to send the officer to the academy. Out of state candidates and their challenges with the MTPC were noted. It was explained that tasers were worn on every shift by every officer, and the company that makes them continues to raise the costs. They were identified as a de-escalation tool. Training cartridges were listed as \$30.62 each, and over the \$1,500 annual training budget. Batteries were noted as being \$90 to \$100 each. Duty cartridges are \$37.00 each. Finance Committee Member Johnson inquired whether body cameras would be used in the near future and it was explained that they would but there needs to be an agreement between law enforcement and the state. The Education / Travel / Conference / Meals budget line was noted as double for training allowance as there is no training available currently in the western part of the state. The need to send officers to quality training was emphasized for leadership and investigative classes. It was pointed out that \$1200 was needed per class for one person, and with only \$5,000 the department would run out of funds for training. It was explained that there is a need to send more than one or two people out for training classes per year, and it is important for future instructor development. It was pointed out that tactics, threats and procedures change frequently, and the training budget needs to increase. Becoming a host training community was briefly discussed to reduce costs. It was pointed out that more training is important for risk management for the Town. The Animal Control Officer budget was also noted as being level-funded. Workman's compensation was reported as having decreased a little. It was pointed out that the Animal and Parking Control Officer does a great job, and has issued \$900 in parking tickets. She checks meters, and does animal control as well. *Board of Selectmen Member Nowak* inquired about overtime and filling in for understaffing and court. It was noted that open positions and a deployed officer required filling in of shifts. Concern was expressed about officers not submitting to random drug testing and it was explained that the staff agreed with it but the policy is not consistent with the state so they drew up their own policy and the labor attorney had wording changes that were reviewed. An inquiry was made whether the Police Department had looked into switching to electric cars, and it was pointed out that electric vehicles are not made to meet what is needed by the force. Courses in mental health situations were noted as important for de-escalation, and officers are currently being trained on this material. Diversity in the force was briefly discussed and noted it is not impossible if the candidates apply. An example for 54 applicants for a position were noted, 2 were minorities and one was a female. It was pointed out that all were evaluated equally to bring forward for interviews. K-9 injury on duty and transport were discussed and it was pointed out that Governor Baker approved a law that allows the ambulance to transport a K-9 and to treat it.

ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Board of Selectmen Member Blanchard to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting, second by Vice Chair Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed. The Board of Selectmen meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary

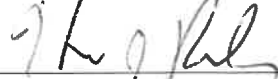


Joseph Nowak, Member



Christine Hoyt, Vice Chair

Richard Blanchard, Member



Howard Rosenberg, Member

John Duval, Chair