



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Wednesday, December 21, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

**TOWN HALL, 8 PARK STREET, ADAMS, MA 01220
1st Floor, Board of Selectmen Meeting Room**

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date, the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 7:00 PM at the Adams Town Hall. Chair John Duval opened the meeting. Present: Chair John Duval, Vice-chair Christine Hoyt, Members Howard Rosenberg, Richard Blanchard, and Joseph Nowak. Also present were Jay Green, Town Administrator; Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary; Town Counsel Edmund St. John; NBCTC; Brian Rhodes, iBerkshires; Gerry Garner, Building Inspector; John Pansecchi, Fire Chief; Chief Kelley, Adams Police Department; Syed Bokhari, Owner of the Mount Royal Inn; Members of the Louison House Board of Directors and Staff; and residents of the Town of Adams.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the December 7th 2022 meeting were submitted for approval.

Motion from Vice-chair Hoyt to waive the reading and approve as submitted for the December 7th, 2022 Meeting. Motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. Motion passes with four yes votes and one abstention from member Nowak.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Inn Keeper's License for Topia Inn, 10 Pleasant St., Adams, MA

A motion was made by Vice-chair Hoyt to put the license back on the table for the purposes of discussion and approval. The motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passes unanimously.

Vice-chair Hoyt noted that Topia Inn has passed its inspection and *made the motion to approve the Inn Keepers License for the Topia Inn at 10 Pleasant Street, Adams Ma. The motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passed unanimously.*

Approval of Common Victualer License for Coffee Liberation Front, 1 Park St. Adams, MA

A motion was made by Vice-chair Hoyt to put the license back on the table for the purposes of discussion and approval. The motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passes unanimously.

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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.
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A Motion was made by Vice-chair Hoyt to approve the Common Victualer License for the Coffee Liberation Front, 1 Park Street, Adams MA. The motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Sunday Entertainment License for TAWJRW, Inc. dba WOJO's

Motion from Vice-chair Hoyt to put the Sunday entertainment license for TAWJRW, Inc. dba WOJO's back on the table. Seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion Vice-chair Hoyt to approve the Sunday entertainment license for TAWJAR, Inc. dba WOJO's, located 27Spring Street, Adams MA contingent upon payment of the Sunday entertainment license Fee. Seconded by Member Blanchard. Motion passes unanimously.

Approval of Common Victualer License for TAWJRW, Inc. dba WOJO's

Motion from Vice-chair Hoyt to put the license back on the table. Seconded by Member Blanchard. Motion passes Unanimously.

Member Rosenberg asked if all licenses can be put back on the table at once. Vice-chair Hoyt clarified that they cannot due to the nature of some of these.

Motion Vice-chair Hoyt to approve the Common Victualer license for TAWJAR, Inc. dba WOJO's, located 27Spring Street, Adams MA contingent upon payment of the Common Victualer license Fee. Seconded by Member Blanchard. Motion passes unanimously.

Approval of Common Victualer License for Poseidon Coffee: Left Tabled

Approval of Common Victualer License for Jones & Dews WX Restaurant Group dba Firehouse Cafe & Bistro, 47 Park Street Adams MA

Motion from Vice-Chair Hoyt to put the license back on the table. Motion is seconded Member Blanchard. Motion passes unanimously.

Motion from Vice-Chair Hoyt to approve the Common Victualer License for Jones & Dews WX Restaurant Group dba Firehouse Café and Bistro at 47 Park Street, Adams MA pending payment of Common Vic License Fee. Motion is Seconded by Member Blanchard. Motion passes unanimously.

Approval of Common Victualer License for James 4:10, LLC McDonalds: Left tabled as we do not have paperwork from McDonalds and lack of tax payment.

Approval of Common Victualer License for Dunkin Donuts: Left tabled as we do not have paperwork from Dunkin Donuts and lack of tax payment.

Approval of Common Victualer Licenses for Pinebrook Pub, LLC 128 Columbia Street, Adams MA

A Motion is made by vice-chair Hoyt to put the license back on the table. The Motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The Motion passes Unanimously

Motion to approve the common Vic for Pinebrook Pub, LLC 128 Columbia Street, Adams MA. The Motion is Seconded by Member Blanchard. Vice-Chair Hoyt amended her Motion to approve the

Common Vic pending payment. Member Blanchard Seconds the Motion with the Amendment. Motion passes Unanimously.

Approval of Common Victualer License for The Rainbow Shack: Left tabled as it is a seasonal business.

Approval of Auto Sales License for Alternative Motors of Adams at 69 Columbia Street: Left tabled due to lack of payment of taxes.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of David Rhinemiller from Alternate Member to Full-time Member of the Adams Zoning Board of Appeals: The Board has received a letter from Eammon Coughlin to express his support of the appointment of David Rhinemiller. Chairman Duval read Eammon Coughlin's letter to the Board.

Motion from Member Blanchard to appoint David Rhinemiller to the Zoning Board of appeals as a permanent member. The motion is seconded by Member Rosenberg. The Motion passes unanimously.

Update on Sale of 20 East Street Property, Jay Green, Town Administrator. Jay Green stated that the closing happened with the buyer of the 20 East Street project concluded two weeks ago. They have handed the property over to the developers who are moving forward with the process by which they will turn it into 9 market rate apartments.

Approval of Sunday Entertainment License for Adams Post #160, Inc. The American Legion of MA, 160 Forest Park Ave., Adams, MA

A motion was made by Vice-chair Hoyt to approve the Sunday entertainment license for Adams Post #160, Inc. The American Legion of MA, 160 Forest Park Ave., Adams, MA for Sunday Entertainment after 1om. The Motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The Motion passes unanimously.

Approval of Sunday Entertainment License for Adams Tavern and Inn, 17 Commercial St., Adams, MA,

A motion is made by Vice-Chair Hoyt approve the Sunday Entertainment License for the Adams Tavern and Inn, 17 Commercial St., Adams, MA, for entertainment after 1pm. The Motion is seconded by Member Blanchard. The motion passes unanimously.

Discussion Regarding Life Safety and Code Concerns at the Mount Royal Inn, 99 Howland Ave, Adams, MA

Syed Bokhari, Owner of Mount Royal Inn introduced himself to the Board.

Chairman Duval asked Fire Chief Pansecchi to come before the board and explain his findings. Chief stated that the sidewalks, ramps and stairs were not kept clear of snow. Initially the agreement was that the Mount Royal would be used as temporary shelter until the end of April 2022.

There have been numerous alarm issues at the Mount Royal Inn. Mr. Bokhari stated that he attempts to address them. The Fire alarms have been tampered with. The alarm company stated that notification is sent to the property management, however action is not taken until the fire department arrives.

Chief Pansecchi stated that he has found alarms deactivated. He has found candles burning in rooms unattended.

Chairman Duval asked what *Chief Pansecchi* meant by stating that the Inn is being used as residential. Chief clarified that people have been there for well over 30 days. There have been applications received by the Town Clerk's office to establish permanent residence at the Mount Royal Inn.

Vice-Chair Hoyt asked if other fire hazards were found.

Mr. Bokhari stated that he has filed his application for renewal online. *Vice-chair Hoyt* clarified that these are applications for inspection, not renewal.

Mr. Bokhari stated that he has a written letter from the fire chief stating that he responds to issues in a timely manner. Chief Pansecchi stated that he responds after the fire department shows up. He does not respond when he is notified by the alarm company.

Mr. Bokhari stated that he has installed cameras in order to make sure that everything is in order. He is trying his best to make sure that everything is in order. He stated that he cannot go into everyone's room on a daily basis in order to check who is burning a candle.

Mr. Bokhari stated that if someone smokes inside, he issues a \$250 fee. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that he has a clear log from May until now, reflecting everyone who has checked in. He stated that he is renting 10 rooms at a time as standard rentals. He stated that he has records from January 2022 until today. He stated that he can provide who has been there any day, who booked online, when they booked, if it was someone who booked online or if it was someone who booked walking in.

Chief Pansecchi stated that there was an ongoing phonline issue. *Chief Pansecchi* stated that it appears to still be being used as a shelter, which is an issue. Chief Pansecchi stated that in his opinion, the Inn is being used as a residence.

Mr. Bokhari stated that he cannot control the phone line. He knows it is an issue and that on December 16th, Spectrum put a new line in.

Member Nowak asked how the Louison House and the Mount Royal Inn became partners. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that they are not partners. *Member Nowak* stated that we are the host community for Williamstown and North Adams as those communities do not have motel rooms available to address housing insecurity.

Mr. Bokhari stated that there is a contract between the Louison House and the Mount Royal Inn. He stated that that contract has residency regulations, code of conduct, and various other rules and regulations establishing the expectations of both parties.

Member Nowak asked how many folks have been evicted. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that 3 people have been evicted.

Member Nowak asked if the Louison House is asked to handle the finding of housing after someone is evicted and how long it takes. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that people are evicted immediately following their violations. It is the role of the Louison house to find new housing for these folks.

Member Nowak asked if it has been individuals or families that are being evicted. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that it was been two individuals and one couple.

Member Nowak asked what the peak number of people was from the Louison House living at the Mount Royal Inn. He said at first it was 14 rooms. In February it was all 16 rooms. In March and April it dropped off to 4 rooms.

Mr. Bokhari stated that the numbers drop off in the warm months.

Member Blanchard asked if there was a control panel for the alarms in the office. *Chief Pansecchi* stated that it is in the basement. *Member Blanchard* asked if that means that folks are not notified. *Chief Pansecchi* stated that someone receives the notification when a trouble alarm rings.

Chief Pansecchi stated that he has been doing quarterly inspections. He stated that he has never seen the rooms empty, maybe one or two, but they all appear to be coming from the Louison House.

Member Blanchard asked if the list is present at the desk on site. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that there is a family that lives there to work the desk. The son speaks English well and understands what is being asked for when emergency services arrive. The parents do not speak English and don't understand what is being asked for.

Mr. Bokhari stated that he is not always given the first and last name from Louison house. They often do not have IDs.

Member Rosenberg read an excerpt from *Chief Pansecchi's* letter to the Louison House wherein it stated that the Inn was supposed to have been resumed regular operation. *Member Blanchard* stated that it is his understanding that this operation should have ended. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that only 4 rooms have continued to be used by the Louisan house.

Chief Pansecchi disagreed. He stated that he seems the same faces each time that he is there, on calls and on inspections.

Mr. Bokhari stated that nobody has raised these concerns to him in the past.

Chairman Duval stated that *Mr. Bokhari* has the right to go into contract with the Louison House.

Vice-chair Hoyt asked how often during a guest's stay is a room cleaned? *Mr. Bokhari* stated that towels, soap and other supplies are provided on a daily basis. *Vice-chair Hoyt* clarified that that means that staff are going to each room on a daily basis. *Mr. Bokhari* stated yes. *Vice-Chair Hoyt*

asked if staff look at smoke detectors on a daily basis. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that folks have the right to refuse room service and staff cannot enter without permission, due to privacy issues.

Vice-Chair Hoyt asked if the chirping alarm system in manager's quarters have been fixed. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that yes, they are fixed.

Vice-chair Hoyt asked if the safety plans have been posted. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that they have been posted and laminated.

Vice-chair Hoyt stated that the issues is that not all people are logged. A third party needs to be contacted.

Gerry Garner, Building Inspector stated that he had gone to the facility and asked for the log book. *Mr. Garner* asked for the rest of the Log Book. *Mr. Garner* stated the individual at the desk stated that he throws the list away at 5pm each day. *Mr. Garner* also asked the management if anyone has been there for longer than 3 months to which staff answered yes.

Mr. Garner asked *Mr. Bokhari* directly for the log books. *Mr. Bokhari* stated that *Mr. Garner* needed to contact the Louisan House for those logs. *Mr. Garner* stated that if folks are living in a space for more than 30 days, there is a change in the code and that the Building Inspector/ Law Enforcement Officers should be able to obtain a log on site.

Mr. Garner asked *Mr. Bokhari* to provide him with the list of folks residing at the property and he stated that he would email it to *Mr. Garner*. He never did.

Mr. Garner stated that he should not have to ask folks at the Louison house for records.

Chief Kelley stated that Detective Wandrei has been out to the Mount Royal Inn on at least one occasion. *Chief Kelley* has stated that there has been an uptick in calls to the space. There have been some responses for services.

Gerry stated that an individual has applied for permanent residency at the Town Clerk's office. They applied for residency in order to have their mail delivered to the room.

Mr. Bokhari again stated that *Mr. Garner* can contact the Louison House for lists. *Mr. Garner* stated that that should not happen.

Member Rosenberg asked if this is being used for longer stays or for short term. *Member Rosenberg* is also concerned about the fact that when *Gerry* asked for a list at the front Desk, there were ambiguous answers.

Member Nowak stated that this is messy management. *Member Nowak* asked if people who walk in and ask for a room go into a database and if guests of the folks who visit their friends at the Inn are asked to sign in at all. *Member Nowak* stated that there are unsettled communications and contracts

with the Louison house. He stated that it needs fine tuning quickly.

Nancy Jolin who works for the Louison house came forward to discuss some of the incidents. Nancy stated that Louison house has cameras there and that they have staff there from 8am-4pm. Nancy stated that a list is given to Mount Royal Inn each time there is a change in residency. She also stated that Louison House has an office room five that they use to check in with guests. She stated that the list is accessible in the front office. Nancy also stated that she has a list of rules and a list of fire drills that have been done. Additionally, she stated that she responds to any fire and EMS calls. Ms. Jolin stated that there is 24 hour monitoring by staff members of the Louison House and they watch the cameras at the Mount Royal Inn. Ms. Jolin stated that the Louison House is working to get people housing but it is incredibly hard.

Member Blanchard asked what portion of the Mount Royal Inn is owned by the Louison House. Ms. Jolin stated that no portion is owned. *Member Blanchard* stated that nobody should have to run around to get a list of who is living there at the time. Ms. Jolin stated that she has the list of folks staying there. Member Blanchard stated that the issue with the Inn not with the Louison House. It is great that the Louison House has lists, however it is not their responsibility. It is the legal responsibility of the owner to have the list available.

Chairman Duval stated that this is really a discussion with the owner to make sure that the owner has everything he needs in order to open on January 1st.

Member Nowak stated the Board has hearts. We are all aware of homelessness in the area and what a hard issue this is.

Member Nowak wanted to know if people are followed up with when they are moved. *Ms. Jolin* stated that they are. *Member Nowak* asked if other services are provided these folks regarding education, employment training, mental health services, etcetera. *Ms. Jolin* stated that the Louison House works with a large number of local service providers to get people the help that they need.

Member Nowak asked if any of the folks who are there for services are families and if the Louison house sees people's lives trending upward. *Member Nowak* also asked how many folks the Louison house at a time. One member of the board stated that the Louison House can house 18-20 individuals and then there are some units available at the Flood House in North Adams.

Member Blanchard stated that the matter before the board is to discuss the life-safety and code issues of the Mount Royal Inn. *Member Blanchard* stated that given everything that Building Commissioner Garner and Chief Pansecchi, it does not appear that they would be able to complete an inspection at this time. Member Blanchard asked Building Commissioner Garner what would be needed in order to get an inspection. Building Commissioner Garner stated that he needs to know what is going on at the Inn.

Chairman Duval stated that this is the 4th year in row wherein we have had to do this process.

Chairman Duval stated that this has been the precedent that is sent as a legal letter has needed to be

sent via certified mail. *Chairman Duval* stated that Building Commissioner Garner needs the appropriate information in order to do his job.

Mr. Bokhari stated that no email was sent to him and all he had was a voicemail. He stated that Building Commissioner never requested documentation.

Mr. Garner agreed to send an email to Mr. Bokhari with everything that he needs. Mr. Bokhari stated that he will get it to Mr. Garner by tomorrow.

Chairman Duval stated that the concern of who is staying at the hotel on a daily basis. *Chairman Duval* asked if a full year's log of who was staying there can be given to Gerry tomorrow. *Chairman Duval* stated that, per-law, that log must be kept.

Review Annual Lodging License Application for Mount Royal Inn, 99 Howland Ave, Adams, MA

Vice-chair Hoyt stated that this is the 4th year that the required paperwork has not been received in a timely fashion. She also stated that this is the 4th year that Town Counsel has had to send a certified letter requiring Mr. Bokhari to provide the required paperwork.

Chairman Duval stated that it is the Board's responsibility to enforce local, state, and federal regulations.

Town Counsel stated that it is important from a legal standpoint.

Susan Puddester of the Louison House Board asked what will happen if the premises does not get the proper documentation by January 1st.

Attorney St. John stated that there may need to be an emergency injunction.

Ms. Puddester stated that they would then need to potentially find housing for 30 people.

There was no action taken on the topic.

Member Blanchard left 8:55

Vice-Chair Hoyt called the meeting back to order at 9:03pm.

Presentation from BT Holdings Regarding Potential Cannabis Development, *Brian Toma and Kaitlyn Dallo (via Zoom)*

Joyology is the name of the brand. It was chosen so it would be seen as bright, clean, and positive. The goal is to offer a full variety of product, similar to how a liquor store offers a full spectrum of products.

There is no specific user who is a "pot head". We see people who are old to young, and professionals to stay at home parents.

Chris, the representative from Joyology stated with medical marijuana there have been about 100 - 150 people a day, wherein there is about 300 people a day with the recreational products (in their flagship store).

Chris from Joyology stated that it is a caregiver type operation. He stated that they are very professional and have been successful in other markets. They are currently working with vendors in Massachusetts in order to supply stores.

Vice-chair Hoyt asked if anyone has questions.

Member Nowak asked why they were interested in Adams. Chris stated that the market in Adams is relatively untapped. *Member Nowak* stated that there is someone in Adams who has put a lot of money into growing.

Member Nowak asked if they have a site in mind? Chris stated that yes, they are working on a site and have already been working on it. *Member Nowak* stated that they are working with Ronnie Ouemette.

Member Nowak stated that he brought this to the forefront years ago and Adams is behind.

Chris stated they mainly have one rule which is that they do not hire rude people.

Vice-chair Hoyt stated she appreciated the introduction.

Jay Green, Town Administrator stated that there is a pretty steep learning curve. Community Development needs a copy of the lease agreement. From there, there needs to be an HCA, CCC provisional, Site plan process, and more.

Jay stated that we would love to see the group in there operating. We have to get some good communication going with the Community Development Project.

Chris stated that they are all about giving back to community with various initiatives including free products with the donation of hats, gloves, etc.

Chris will be readily available more and more moving forward.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Vice-Chair Hoyt: None

Member Rosenberg: None

Member Nowak: The Western Mass Woodlands Partnership had an outreach meeting. They worked on getting the website established.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER

Transfer Station Holiday Hours

- December 24th, 2022 – 7:30am-12pm
- December 31st, 2022 -7:30am-12pm

Chairman Duval: The Town Hall holiday hours. The Town Hall will be closed on Friday, 12/23 Monday, 12/26

Vice-Chair Hoyt: Happy Holidays

Member Rosenberg: Wishing everyone a safe and warm holiday season

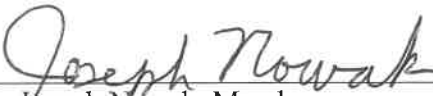
Member Nowak: What is happening with the Carlow Building? Jay Green stated that it is currently privately owned and they are not yet working on it.

Chairman Duval stated that in the future, anyone who intends to record part or all of the meeting needs to inform the chair at the beginning of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Vice-chair Hoyt. Motion was seconded by Member Blanchard. The meeting was adjourned at 9:24pm.

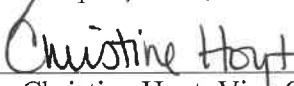
Respectfully Submitted by Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.



Joseph Nowak, Member



Richard Blanchard, Member



Christine Hoyt, Vice Chairman



Howard Rosenburg, Member

John Duval, Chairman