

**TOWN OF ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**ADAMS TOWN HALL BUILDING, 1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES 10/4/17**

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by Chairman Duval at 7:00 p.m. Members Hoyt, Blanchard and Nowak were present as well as Town Administrator Mazzucco and Town Counsel St. John.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

CLERK

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** September 20, 2017 and September 26, 2017 Workshop Minutes were presented for approval. Move by Member Hoyt to waive reading and approve the Workshop minutes of September 20, 2017 and September 26, 2017 as submitted, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Jeff Lefebvre asked about mold in the Memorial School, if the elevator has been tested and if the Town received a fine. Town Administrator Mazzucco advised the mold in the building is not toxic and the Town is waiting for the insurance company to allow use of building. The Town received a letter but municipalities don't pay fines and the Town is looking at whether to decommission the elevator. The Town Administrator was thanked for coming to the Maple Grove Civic Club meeting, and the next meeting will take place on October 15th. Francie Riley of the Adams Arts Advisory Board advised there is a new mural for the *Art on the Trail* project on the Visitors Center. Charlotte Avery asked for updates on the Grant Street drainage issue. A study is being done and it will give cost estimates and options. Chief Tarsa reminded citizens of Ramblefest, and Monday is the Greylock Ramble, Half Marathon and 8K on the Bike trail. Parking will be allowed in the Mill parking lot. Hoosac Street from Chee's to Winter Street intersection will be blocked off for the safety of the runners and alternate routes for travel were given. Information will be available on social media.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** *Classification Hearing – 7:10 p.m.:* Move by Member Blanchard to enter the Public Hearing, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Discussion ensued regarding splitting the tax rate. Town Assessor MacDonald outlined shift options. The Town Administrator gave an explanation of how the tax rate is composed. Property off the tax rolls from tax taking was explained. There were some discrepancies noted between the inspectors and a follow up inspection, which were found to be due to inspectors not gaining access to the home. An inquiry was made about how many renters vs. homeowners there are in Adams. The public was asked for questions or comments. Jeff Lefebvre inquired about the single tax rate increase which would be \$1.40 on the Residential rate but the Commercial rate would go down. He asked to keep with 112% split. He noted that slum and blight is coming into the community because people can't afford to pay taxes and asked the Board to start reviewing the budget now. Charlotte Avery expressed concern about a list of names in the newspaper of those who have not paid taxes and asked why the Town waited so long to go after them. The Town Administrator advised the office responsible was mismanaged but the current Tax Collector is doing an excellent job and working aggressively on getting the funds and putting liens on the properties. There were no other public comments. Move to close the Public Hearing by Member Blanchard, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Board Members gave an overview of why the funds are needed, discussed a potential cut in services with layoffs and attrition if the taxes are not raised and noted staff is already pared down. It was mentioned that staff should think before asking for a 3% increase. It was expressed that Adams is a great community with good services that cost money and the Board must show urgency regarding the \$25 levy limit and must make decisions now to operate differently. A recommendation was made to start talking with the Water District and DPW, which are separate entities, and to look at a sewer fee to reduce the tax rate. Additional discussion took place between Board Members and citizens. Jeff Lefebvre pointed out that in the last couple years the average tax bill went up about \$1000. Bill Kolis, an owner of commercial property, expressed concern about the proposed tax increase on commercial properties. He advised the increase would be devastating and counter-productive, and would have a strong effect on people trying to do business on Park Street. George Haddad, also a business owner, noted that standalone businesses would be most impacted, specifically Specialty Minerals and Aladco. The decreasing population in addition to state mandates on the community was given as a reason for the increase.



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A 115% increase this year is a twenty cent increase from 2016. Increased property values with the reassessment were noted as compounding the problem, causing businesses to relocate. Adams is lower than other communities for commercial tax rate but there is more opportunity in other communities. The Train is noted as a positive change in the dynamics of Adams. It was pointed out that many start-up businesses don't have proper business plans. Move by Member Blanchard to adopt the 115% shift, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: Member Blanchard in favor, Chairman Duval, Members Hoyt and Nowak opposed. Motion failed. Move by Member Nowak to adopt a 112% shift, second by Hoyt. Vote: unanimous.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Adams-Cheshire Regional School District Superintendent, Dr. Putnam* – Dr. Putnam was ill and unable to attend. Move by Member Blanchard to table this item, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous.

*One Day Wine & Malt License, Bright Ideas Brewing, Adams Visitors Center, Ramblefest* – All documents were reviewed by the Chairman. Move by Member Blanchard to approve the One Day Wine & Malt License for Bright Ideas Brewing at the Adams Visitors Center on October 8, 2017 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous.

*Proposed Assignment of Street Number, Map 220, Parcel 00009, James F. St. John, Jr. Revocable Trust* Chairman Duval reviewed the process briefly. Move by Member Blanchard to approve the assignment of the subdivision of Map 220, Parcel 00009 at 98 Alger Street owned by James F. St. John, Jr. Revocable Trust to Street Number 100 Alger Street, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous.

*Approval of Garden Volunteer* – A brief background was given by the Town Administrator to the Board about Jocelyn Schlagetter wanting to garden the Veterans Memorial area. Move by Member Hoyt to approve Jocelyn Schlagetter to the position of Garden Volunteer for the Town of Adams for the Veterans Memorial Garden, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous. A brief discussion took place about gardening the Roundabout and it was noted that no signs may be placed in the Roundabout area due to public safety reasons.

*Susan B. Anthony Statue Location* – Chairman Duval gave background about the events scheduled for 2020 and noted the location that had come to the Board as a proposed location being the Town Common. The exact spot in the Town Common is to be determined but will allow the committee to go forward with fundraising and plans. A grant funding plan was briefly discussed, as funds are limited. Erin Mucci and Bill Kolis of the Statue Sub-Committee gave an overview of what the committee is trying to do and gave the recommendation. The Town will issue an RFP before the end of the year. There is no design planned and potential artists and sculptors need a location to work with. A website for more information was given as [www.celebratesusanbanthony.org](http://www.celebratesusanbanthony.org) and there is an Etsy store where Susan B. Anthony jewelry is available. There will be a booth at Ramblefest on Sunday. The Hoosac Street Gallery will be open at Ramblefest from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be an Afternoon Tea at the Firehouse Café on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. There is also a Facebook Page *Celebrate Susan B. Anthony*. Move by Member Hoyt to approve the location of the Town Common for a proposed Susan B. Anthony Statue with final details subject to approval by the Board of Selectmen, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

*Setting of Halloween hours* – Move by Member Hoyt to approve Halloween Hours for Tuesday, October 31, 2017 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous.

*Halloween Parade, Lions Club* – Chairman Duval read an email sent by the applicant and facility use request for the Visitors Center parking lot by Adams Lions Club. Move by Member Nowak to approve the use of the Visitors Center Parking Lot by the Lions Club on Sunday, October 29, 2017 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. for the Halloween Parade, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.



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*First Reading - Board Governance and Administration Policy* – Chairman Duval gave an overview of the policy handbook. Section one has been worked on by the Town Administrator and the Board reviewed the input given. Each change to the policy will require two readings in two meetings for a policy to be reviewed for approval. The Town Administrator read the contents of the section by category. Move by Member Blanchard to move to the second reading, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. The document will be posted on the Town website.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Town Administrator's Report:** Bids for the Train Station Platform went out this week and it will likely be built in the spring. Bids were received for the C.T. Plunkett Boiler Room Roof, which will require reserve fund transfer, but it is close to getting started. Permits for the Transfer Station open next week, and the fee is \$25, which will go up in July, and is required for solid waste, recycling and brush. Recycling is free with the permit, and there is a per-bag charge for trash. It costs the Town \$25,000 to haul recycling away. There is a two-truckload limit for brush dumping per year. Leaf pickup will still be done by the DPW. The Primary Election will be held on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Lee's Dynasty Asian Fusion had a soft opening this week. The Civil Service petition is making its way through the Legislature. Engineers met at Bellevue Cemetery to review the existing structure. The Town was awarded the *GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award*. Adams is the only community in Berkshire County to receive this award. Work is being done with BRPC to get a training program ready for the ZBA and it will be opened up to the Board of Selectmen, Planning, Zoning and other participants. The Mobile Food Bank program at the Council on Aging went well again last week. Chapter 90 funds were received for the Grant Street analysis. Board Members noted that some properties by the Cook Street Crossing are unsightly and will be viewed by the train. The Town Administrator noted he can get addresses and send letters.

**Town Counsel Report:** Town Counsel St. John advised he reviewed and responded to an insurance question from Community Development; he responded to a question from the Town Administrator concerning a claim against the Route 8 contractor and contacted the insurer; he responded to a question concerning work of the Board of Survey; he met with the Zoning Enforcement Officer and prosecuted an appeal of citation. He also attended a hearing before the Division of Administrative Law Appeals and met with the Veterans' Services Officer.

**SUB-COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS**

Member Nowak attended a meeting in Charlemont with the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership. They will testify in front of House and Senate. Member Hoyt attended a Budget Sub-Committee meeting regarding the Tax Classification Hearing and attended the ZBA meeting last week. She also attended the Adams Arts Advisory Board unveiling of the Art on the Trail at the Visitors Center. Chairman Duval also attended the Budget Sub-Committee and ZBA meetings.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Member Nowak advised he is pleased with the painting on Summer Street. There is a new hairdresser and the Spring Street Café is getting redone. He noted Alberts Hardware is being scraped to put paint on it, and perhaps a mural on the building would spruce it up. The Belle Sky business is going well. A local inn is in negotiations for potentially leasing to a medical marijuana business. Member Hoyt reminded everyone of Ramblefest Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Monday is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Greylock Ramble and the first 1000 hikers that get to the top will receive a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary patch and certificate. Shuttles will be provided and more information may be found on social media. Tuesday is Special State Primary Day for the First District State Representative position from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and the polling location is the Highway Garage on North Summer Street. COA transportation is available. 1Berkshire did a nice job with the fall foliage parade and festival. There was a float that was a tribute to Mt. Greylock and captured the feeling of the festival.

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Hoosac Valley Marching Band looked sharp and sounded great. Member Blanchard noticed a post about The Ramble by Ilvermorney. Chairman Duval announced Peter Guttmann stepped down from the ZBA after years of service and thanked him volunteering and his time spent there. He confirmed the Special Town Meeting is on course for December. Town Administrator Mazzucco is getting through some ordinance work and medical marijuana bylaw for the Special Town Meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION #1**

*#2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel;*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION #2**

*#3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares;*

Move by Member Blanchard to enter into Executive Sessions #1 and #2, second by Member Nowak. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Duval, Members Blanchard, Nowak and Hoyt. 8:49 p.m.

Move by Member Blanchard to exit from Executive Sessions #1 and #2, second by Member Nowak. Roll Call Vote: Duval, Hoyt, Nowak, Blanchard. 9:46 p.m.

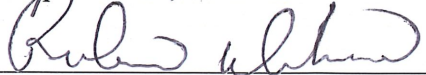
**ADJOURNMENT**

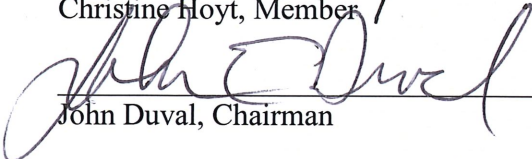
Move to adjourn by Member Blanchard, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary

  
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Joseph Nowak, Member

  
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Christine Hoyt, Member

  
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Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman

  
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John Duval, Chairman