

TOWN OF ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS
ADAMS TOWN HALL BUILDING, 1st FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES 11/01/17

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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 11, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes were presented for approval. Move by Member Hoyt to waive reading and approve the minutes of October 11, 2017 as submitted, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *Virginia Duval*, resident of Adams announced the *Vote for Susan* project, as Susan B. Anthony couldn't vote but now citizens can. After the formation of Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee (ASCCC) this inspiration was created, and hopes to promote voting in Adams. 2020 is 100th celebration of suffrage. The intent is to increase the number of registered voters in Adams to vote in elections and to encourage participation in Local Government. Election statistics were given and empty precinct seats in Town were noted. Meetings are being set up with the civic groups in town and there is a potential to have school system activity. Susan B. Anthony related activities that took place over the last year were noted and she is working with local media to bring about awareness. Join the information list at Voteforsusan2020@gmail.com and look up the Facebook page *Vote for Susan Project*. *Ann Morris* of Meadow Street, Adams told the Board she has worked for Registry and has been in contact with Special Investigations in Boston regarding vehicles at a residence on Meadow Street receiving mail and have not changed over their license plates. She advised the Town should collect the excise tax. She noted that parties that move have to transfer over plates within thirty days. She advised she had previously spoken with Chief Tarsa and the Town Administrator who were in agreement that she was incorrect. Chairman Duval requested she submit an official complaint in writing and was given contact information.

PUBLIC HEARING: *Public hearing to determine whether the building located on the premises located at 50 Commercial Street, Adams, Massachusetts must be demolished or whether other action should be taken to secure the building or otherwise make it safe, 7:10 p.m.* Move by Member Blanchard to enter Public Hearing, second by Hoyt; vote: unanimous. The Town Administrator gave an overview of the process and the Board of Survey determination of a public safety threat to the Town from the 50 Commercial Street property because the roof collapsed and material fell in a public way and public street. *Paul Goyette*, Board of Survey member advised he viewed the property which is in disrepair and has collapsed in several areas. He expressed concern that someone will get hurt and the needs to be taken care of quickly. *Don Torrico*, Building Commissioner for the Town of Adams, recommended bringing in an engineer. *Roy Anderson*, of Hill Engineering advised he viewed the property several weeks ago but did not go inside because of the danger. He noted the back portion of one story had partially collapsed except for the east wall. Brick walls are still standing and not in good repair. He noted on the two-story portion of the building along Commercial Street it is possible to look up through the windows and see the sky through the roof. Parts of the second floor have collapsed. He advised a snowstorm may bring the roof into the second floor and buckle the walls. *Fire Chief Pansecchi* advised the structure is very dangerous to firefighters and if something happens with the building it could collapse. *Charles Ransford*, owner of the 50 Commercial Street building gave an explanation and timeline of how the building deteriorated. He explained his real estate background and that he had a considerable amount of property. He noted in Adams he does not owe any taxes currently, but the previous Tax Collector refused to make a payment agreement with him. He acknowledged the roof needed repair and he gave a lengthy explanation of how he was unable to get a building permit to proceed with the repairs. He expressed willingness to work with the Town but was not sure what could be done at this point.

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James Leitch of 2 Edmund Street explained he resides near the building, was the Building Inspector in Adams for 20 years and worked with architects and engineers that evaluated hundreds of existing buildings. He expressed it was his opinion that the building is unsafe, dangerous and a threat is imminent. Timber trusses are rotted, falling down, and leaning on the masonry wall. The roof on the second story is partially collapsed, the second floor is partially collapsed, the rear steel wall is tipping in and out, the building is not secure, there is broken glass, and graffiti above the first floor indicates there has been activity at the building. He asked the Board to vote to take the building down concurrent with any notices served on the owner to do the procurement and recommended notices be done by civil process. He asked the Board to stabilize the site after demolition so there is no ongoing problem with dust and erosion. *Ann Dabrowski* of 4 Edmond Street echoed that she is in favor of having something done to clean up this property and expressed she is afraid to drive by property after seeing the engineering report. She asked the Board to expedite their attention to this issue and strongly supported going forward with demolition. *Janet Patel* of 4 Edmond Street noted the building is driving down property values and is blight. She strongly proposed that the building be demolished and the area be made safe so another building can be put in there. Move by Member Blanchard to come out of the Public Hearing, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous. Board Members asked questions regarding procurement, the stabilizing process and using civil service. The Town Administrator advised he can prepare the process so it is ready to go. Town Counsel advised in the interest of preserving Mr. Ransford's rights as the property owner he recommended proceeding with court action which can be ready to go at end of the 30 day period. The process of securing the order to demolish and the Town placing a lien on the property was outlined. Mr. Ransford clarified his attempt to repair the roof over the time he owned the property. The Building Commissioner gave details on the regulations that require a permit depending on the extent of the repairs being done. The building was previously an auto-body shop which closed. It was noted that there are still lumber and building materials inside the building and the Fire Chief can assist with the acetylene tank removal in demolition process. Building Commissioner Torrico advised the building has not been condemned and the owner may enter the building at his own risk. Board Members expressed concern about safety and noted it is a heavily foot travelled area. The Town could get an emergency injunction or an order to allow for demolition if need be. It was noted if a wall collapsed the Town would need to block off Edmond Street which would impede emergency vehicle access. The process options and Brownfields issues were addressed. The Town does no remediation of an unsafe structure. Move by Member Nowak to request Mr. Ransford demolish the building in thirty days and Town Staff and Town Counsel to go forward with a court order if it is not demolished, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

Change of Manager Application, Adams Post #160 Inc, The American Legion of MA, 160 Forest Park Avenue, Adams, MA 01220, to Anthony Smachetti – David Smachetti was in attendance representing the American Legion. Application paperwork was reviewed by the Board. Move by Member Nowak to change the Manager of the American Legion Post #160 to Anthony Smachetti, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

Appointment of Michael Mucci to ACRSD Regional Agreement Amendment Committee – Member Hoyt advised that two residents, one BOS member and one Finance Committee Member were needed for the ***ACRSD Regional Agreement Amendment Committee***. Michael Mucci was recommended with Erin Milne to serve. Move by Member Nowak add Erin Milne to the Agenda with Michael Mucci as a representative to the ***ACRSD Regional Agreement Amendment Committee***, second by Member Hoyt. Voted in favor were Chairman Duval, Member Hoyt and Member Nowak. Voted in opposition was Vice Chairman Blanchard. Motion carried. Move by Member Nowak to appoint Michael Mucci and Erin Milne to RAAC Committee, second by Member Hoyt. Vote: unanimous.

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Facility Use Request 1, Visitors Center – Glen Diehl – Glen Diehl thanked the Town for welcoming the Berkshire Scenic Railway. The sound of the horn on the train has been improved to reduce complaints. The request is to use the main meeting room of the Visitors Center for the sub-committee of Berkshire Scenic Railway. Move by Member Hoyt to approve use of the Visitors Center on November 11, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. by the Berkshire Scenic Railway Sub-Committee for a meeting, second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

Facility Use Request 2, Visitors Center – Glen Diehl explained the request involves use of Visitors Center as a pass through to the train during the *Tinsel Liner* service, beginning November 24th. He reviewed the times the facility would be used. The Train will take approximately an hour and a half on a trip and passengers would go through the Visitors Center, to the train and back to the parking lot. He noted it is a great opportunity to advertise Adams. There have been 8000 passengers on the train so far this year. The request is to use the Visitors Center on the dates provided from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on four trip days and three trips on Sundays. Someone will be manning the Visitors Center. *Council on Aging Director, Erica Girgenti* encouraged the partnership between the Town and the Berkshire Scenic Railway. She pointed out that Adams is a recreational snow community and people come to the Visitors Center between Columbus Day and Memorial Day so those enrolled in the Senior Tax Work-off Program may be able to assist. The safety of those crossing the street to the Train Station was discussed and there will be a flashing red light at Hoosac Street. Flood lamps on the train and the platform will give lighting. The Fall Foliage trains sold out, and an expected 2,400 people will be coming through the Visitors Center for the *Tinsel Liner*, a Christmas themed train. Berkshire Scenic Railway was thanked for their contribution to the community and it was noted that the First Grade children enjoyed their recent train ride. An inquiry was made if Chapter 90 Funds could provide lighting. Member Nowak was thanked for taking the children for the train ride and was complimented for being part of the team as a Selectman. Move by Member Hoyt to approve the use of the Visitors Center by the Berkshire Scenic Railway from 11:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. on four trip days and Sunday December 18th from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., second by Member Blanchard. Vote: unanimous.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator's Report: Elections are next week at 92 North Summer Street. Construction of the C.T. Plunkett boiler room roof will be starting soon. Thanks were given to the Forest Wardens for work done on the roof at Memorial School. The Transfer Station is open for trash. The DPW staff, Tim Cota, Steve Skrocki, Stavri Yanka, and Marilyn Kolis were acknowledged for their excellent work on this project. Also thanked were Town Accountant Mary Beverly, Town Treasurer Kelly Rice, and volunteers Ed Driscoll, Greg Deblois, Linda Cernik, Sandy Totter, and Bruce Shepley. 240 permits have been sold. The Town is installing the LED lights in the downtown and a sample is installed by the church. Board Members noted the DPW has done a nice job with the transfer station and improvements were made to the roadway including raising and grading the road and building a concrete retaining wall. Board Members inquired about the status of the Town Hall Roof Project. The Town is finalizing bids but is looking at whether to include the clock tower which is taking in water and may require a fund transfer. The C.T. Plunkett Boiler Room Roof project is expected to be within the estimate. The model looks very similar but the exact same model could not be gotten, causing a delay. Concern about mold in the Memorial School Building was addressed and there has been limited use of the building by Emergency Management and the Information Technology staff. Some parts of the building had an elevated non-toxic mold count but it has not grown. The insurance company said the building was OK to use. It was confirmed that BART could now be authorized to use building after one area of the gymnasium, the auditorium, and the basement are cleaned.

Town Counsel Report: *There was no report submitted at this meeting.*

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Council on Aging: *COA Director Erica Girgenti* thanked the families of Felicia Clarke and Bob Zaija for donations to the Council on Aging. Newsletters are at the Visitors Center and Town Hall. The Mobile Food Bank is held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator were invited to volunteer. Those participating were encouraged to arrive before 12:00 p.m. so they are not turned away. It is open enrollment for Medicare for those aged 65 and older and the Council on Aging is booking appointments into November to help with this process. Citizens can apply for fuel assistance through BCAC. Those over the income eligibility may partner with the Salvation Army for the Good Neighbor Energy Fund for heating assistance. The Town increased the Income Tax Work-off Program guidelines, and there are positions to fill. Those interested and also those willing to be on the active list to set up a shelter with Emergency Management in the event of an emergency may contact her for information. The donation to the Friends of COA of Jean King's photographic prints was acknowledged and there will be a reception in Town Hall. The COA is a SNAP provider and will process applications. COA Outreach Worker Barb Proper was praised for helping people maximize dollars. Board Members noted the Town is fortunate to have a robust COA that looks after its seniors.

SUB-COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

Member Nowak attended the Planning Board meeting where getting a By-Law for Recreational Marijuana was discussed. Community Development Director Donna Cesan was thanked for her work on this. A reorganization of the Board took place. David Rhinemiller is the Chair and is now the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission representative. *Member Hoyt* attended the Planning Board meeting and heard the presentation on the Train Museum in North Adams. She thanked the *Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee* for their Tea Event and outlining their events and activities. She attended the grand opening of the Mildred Elley admissions office on Main Street in North Adams. She attended the ZBA meeting and they need members. There will be a process in place to apply to serve on that board. She attended the *Berkshire County Selectman's Association* meeting and brought the raffle prize. She spoke with the Lt. Governor and reinforced the Town's commitment to the Community Compact and addressing community development. She represented the Board of Selectmen on a panel discussion at *WAM Theater* at Shakespeare and Company regarding women and their role in politics. She discussed inclusion and making sure communities are safe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, GOOD OF THE ORDER

Member Nowak requested Ed St. John IV provide information on the Summer Youth Program attendance and financial needs. *Member Hoyt* announced the parking ban is in effect and there are Kearns Lane and Renfrew Parking Lot stickers available. Adams Fire Department is looking for members and those interested in joining should contact the Fire Chief.

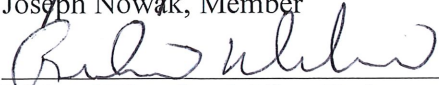
ADJOURNMENT

Move by Member Blanchard to adjourn, second by Member Nowak. Vote: unanimous. Meeting Adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



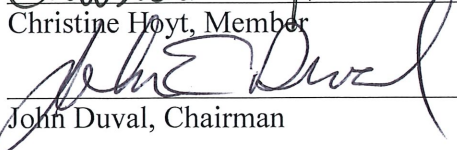
Joseph Nowak, Member



Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman



Christine Hoyt, Member



John Duval, Chairman