

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

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP MINUTES 03/20/2018**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Duval at 6:00 p.m. Members Blanchard, Hoyt and Nowak were present as well Interim Town Administrator Cesar and Town Accountant Beverly.

**FY2019 Budget Review:** Town Accountant Beverly gave an overview of how the budget was formed. Investment of Free Cash and the regulations around it were reviewed. Clarification was made on the number for Certified Free Cash for use until June 30, 2018. Board Members commented on strategy of the use of Free Cash to reduce the tax rate. The individual budgets were reviewed for discussion. A consensus was reached to discuss the budgets and vote on them in a future televised meeting.

**Town Accountant:** An increase of \$4,000 to continue operations was noted, and Medicare costs are up.

**Insurance Property/Liability:** This budget was noted as level funded. Employee benefits were explained and an old worker's compensation claim was detailed. The Town will be responsible for cost of living increases going forward. Employee health insurance is a 0% increase.

**Technology:** A standard 3% increase was noted and Rob Wnuk was commended for his work and value. It was noted that there will be increases in maintenance and consulting for contracts, software upkeep and to make some software changes. The maintenance consultant is support for all of the computer programs. There will be software needed for the Assessor as the State program will be dissolved and replaced with new software. A new server will be needed in 2020 and some things need to be upgraded to prepare. All computers need to be upgraded to Microsoft 2016 and some new computers are needed. Since technology has gotten so important with the Police Department and online permitting that it was noted as necessary to keep up to date. The new server will be a virtual server. The line cost is for Verizon and Spectrum for maintenance of current lines. The Town will be buying the servers. It was noted that the oldest computers will get replaced first.

**Town Assessor:** The increase was explained as payroll for temporary personnel for the new software, which is part of the MUNIS program and will require data entry. The cost for the software will only be dues for the first year; and the second year dues will be \$4,700. The Commonwealth gave Assessors \$1 Million to implement the new software program. Other software choices were around \$30,000. The Town chose to go with the least expensive option to keep the budget as low as possible. A dual system will have to be run for six months, with two monitors on the staff desks and data entry on two systems at the same time until it is confirmed that the conversion is done correctly. Then a full field review will be done. It was explained that this is a recertification year so it needs to be done by September for bills to be sent out efficiently. The Workman's Compensation Insurance increase was explained as part of the additional work. The Management/Consulting line is for work done every three years and the Department of Local Services confirms numbers are correct before submission.

**Town Clerk:** The biggest increase was explained as the Elections budget because there will be three elections in the next year. An increase for elections this year to \$29,000 is due to early voting which was implemented in 2017. Last year a Reserve Fund transfer was requested for additional funds for the extra elections. The Town has not yet purchased the new machines, and the purchase must go before the Board of Selectmen before the purchase is made. It is anticipated this will be submitted by May and ready for the September Primary Elections. New voting booths, chairs and possibly tables are needed as the current ones are falling into disrepair.



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**Tax Collector/Treasurer:** Encumbered legal services from last year were explained. There was an auction in June which was expended in June but paid in FY2018. Office expenditures were noted as decreasing. Debt Service was explained. The School Debt Service will be a separate budget line item. Debt override will be added separately and the Debt service schedule was reviewed.

**Emergency Management:** It was explained that the Memorial School building is operating as the Town's Emergency Shelter. The old High School generator at the C.T. Plunkett School does not work and the Memorial School building has heat, water, and will continue to be improved. The building is accessible from the center of town and is handicap accessible. The main floor has everything needed, including rooms that can be used to break down groups such as children or families give more privacy. It was noted that the hallway is blocked off after last bathroom and is accessible before that point. The space can currently hold 200 people and there are enough cots, blankets, and personal hygiene kits for 150 people. Downstairs is a potential place for pets in crates because it has a drain. At C.T. Plunkett School citizens would have to go upstairs to the gymnasium. It was noted that currently if there was a power outage in town the power is connected to the heating system. A generator could power the whole building. Fuel, batteries and other equipment requested were listed.

**Forest Wardens:** The Forest Wardens budget has been level funded for over a decade and an increase of \$2,000 each will compensate staff as they do a lot for the town with very little pay. The Forest Wardens garage needs two main doors. One of the panels is being held up by duct tape and the need is reflected on the gas bill. The status of the vehicles and their descriptions were given. The 1975 Ford was noted as having some major issues and parts cannot be found for it. The brakes have to be sent out to be relined, at a cost of \$1,200 per wheel. The 500 gallon tank sprung leaks that are in places that cannot be patched so it can only hold 250 gallons now. The Forest Wardens acquired a 1980 Chevy from another town for \$1 and it is leaking because of old pipes. Other units were described as having issues but still running. It was noted that eventually 1975 Ford will need to be discarded. It was explained that the initial shelter kits were received and the department now orders from the company to fill in anything needed without the big blue box. The number of times the Forest Wardens were called out to support emergencies was noted. Responses included tropical storms, flooding, cellar pumping, sandbagging and working as a team to support the DPW. The number of generators was given and they are able to provide power for lighting and doors. A 10kW generator from a pass-through program is not working and needs someone able to fix military equipment. There are adequate portable but no fixed generators.

**Veteran Services:** This budget has changed a little because of the sharing cost of a few more entities if approved by the Board of Selectmen. The amount reflected is for only Adams. The Memorial Day Remembrance fund is for the Highlanders, whose fee continues to increase. It was noted that the Memorial Grave Markers have decreased in funding. It was noted they are actual flag holders made of zinc and are sometimes damaged by lawn machines. They are provided by the Department of Veterans Services and if damaged pictures are sent to their department. It is the responsibility of the Town's Cemetery Department to install them.

**Selectmen:** The budget for stipends was explained and the Temporary line item is for a court judgement the Town is under for years to come. Medicare was noted as a match. Education, Travel, Conferences and Meals were explained. Annual dues, and repairs and maintenance for the photocopier come out of the Board of Selectmen budget. Discretionary items for stationary, advertising, Slum & Blight were also listed in this budget. An encumbrance from the previous year was put toward the 50 Commercial Street demolition.



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**Town Administrator:** The contract and salary budget was created to allow for the Board of Selectmen to be flexible with negotiations, and insurance was put in as a family plan in case that is needed. Overtime is for the Administrative Assistant for meetings. Legal Services is for Labor Counsel and other outside Counsel. Dues were discussed. A Capital Expense for the Agricultural Fair upgrade for \$5,000 is in this budget. The Agricultural Fair has been asked for the accounting on their use of the funds and they were very forthcoming. An inquiry was made whether Workman's Compensation and Unemployment insurances go out to bid or if the Town uses the same insurance company. The Town's MIIA insurance was explained and it was noted that last year the Town received \$10,000 back in dividends. Economic Development and Marketing lines were explained.

**Town Counsel:** A standard salary increase of 3% was noted and it was pointed out that it does not matter how many times the Town requests services. It was explained that this was for Edmund St. John III, not the firm, and that Edmund St. John IV does not get a stipend from the Town.

**Town Report:** An increase was noted because in the past couple years the budget had been cut and there were not enough copies published. It was noted that they are printed and bound locally.

**Moderator:** It was explained that the \$300 stipend for Moderator has not changed.


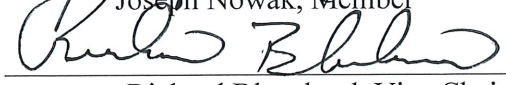
**Finance Committee:** This budget showed no increase. The Temporary line item is to pay someone to do meeting minutes. Printing and binding funds were explained as for generating the warrant book for Town Meeting.



**Reserve Fund:** Last year \$175,000 was put into the Reserve Fund and the same is proposed for this year. A brief discussion took place about the funding for snow and ice due to the recent storms. The Stabilization Fund was reviewed.

**Parking Management:** A Parking Attendant position has been negotiated with the Union to collect funds from parking meters. It was noted that this will become important with the completion of the Visitors Center parking lot project. A job description is being created to bring forward to the Personnel Sub-committee to get this done and approved before the end of the Fiscal Year. \$7,400 was previously appropriated for it and a large portion will likely be put into Free Cash because it will not be used in this Fiscal Year. It was pointed out that this position may increase in hours and could potentially be a full time position in the future. Proper maintenance of meters was discussed and consistency was noted as vital for success.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Hoyt, Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary

  
Joseph Nowak, Member  
  
Richard Blanchard, Vice Chairman

  
Christine Hoyt, Member  
  
John Duval, Chairman