

TOWN OF ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS

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

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP MINUTES 10/10/2018

TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Duval at 6:00 p.m. Vice Chairman Nowak and Members, Hoyt and Bush were present, as well Interim Town Administrator Cesan, Emergency Management Director Kleiner, Representative Barrett and A.J. Enchill, District Aide from Senator Hinds' office.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion about Flooding Impacts: The District Aide to Senator Hinds, A.J. Enchill Jr., Emergency Management Director, Dick Kleiner, and Bob Wynn with VHB were introduced. A background of the events that took place since the September flooding devastation was given. It was noted that the Board of Selectmen was determined to find out the causes of the flooding events through engineering studies to be able to plan, design and repair correctly so it does not have to be redone. It was explained that the main focus is on repairs to public infrastructure, which were estimated to be in excess of \$2 Million. By declaring an emergency, approving a resolution for deficit spending and meeting tomorrow night with the Finance Committee the Board of Selectmen will put in place a Special Town Meeting on October 25th. The Town hopes for state assistance due to the huge costs of immediate repairs for infrastructure, and the need for a watershed study to look at the impacts of high velocity water from Southwick Brook. VHB is assisting with the approach to understanding these issues.

At 6:06 p.m. State Representative John Barrett arrived.

Karen Rose, representing Sandra Rose of 76 Lime Street inquired if there will be tax abatements and funding for residents since the \$1.9 Million is focused on infrastructure, and inquired how the disbursement of funds will take place. She questioned the timing of the Declaration of Emergency. It was explained that since there was no shared issue among communities the Town was told by MEMA Officials there would not be a MEMA Declaration. It was noted that the Town followed the proper process, submitted letters to MEMA and contacted the state for guidance, which was followed, and the Town is going to have a Special Town Meeting. Ms. Rose inquired why the Conservation Commission was not involved to oversee the overflow of Southwick Brook, and noted there was no response from the Town until she requested sandbags. It was explained that the DPW, Town Staff, and Forest Wardens were taking care of several areas simultaneously and had a lot to deal with to handle problems at multiple places. The emergency team and officials deal with the emergencies first, then the Conservation Commission will be involved as part of the process. Ms. Rose gave her recollection of difficult dealings with the Conservation Commission in the past and advised she wants to know what results will be had. It was pointed out that the Board of Selectmen will require an engineering study to determine what is causing the problem in that area. Ms. Rose advised of a retention pond that was put in for the solar field, which she said she has visited and during heavy rains found the retention ponds empty but the ground saturated. She questioned the study on whether the brook can handle the runoff and whether this will be included in the Town's new study. She asked what the emergency plan was for tomorrow's flash flood watches and if the solar field owners were doing scheduled maintenance supervised by the Town to be sure everything is being maintained properly. The adopted conditions and schedule from the solar field were noted as being something that could be provided. Henry Jaeschke, 23 Gould Road advised if five or more inches of rain fall and Southwick Brook runs all over the roads it will take other things with it. He suggested putting in larger pipes. Board Members advised that when storms hit Board Members and staff including DPW and Emergency Management are out monitoring.

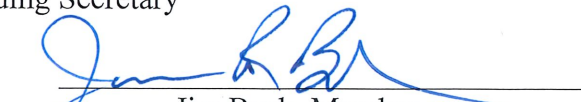
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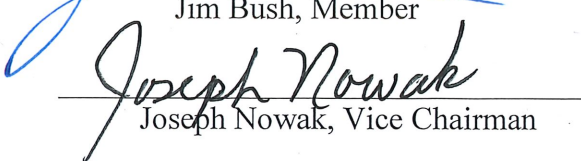
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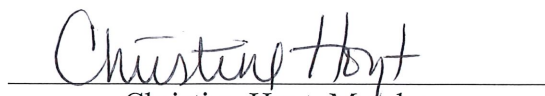
Member Nowak explained the topography of the area and his personal investigation and findings of the area of Florida Road, Old County Road and along the brook to Lime Street. Ms. Rose showed a picture of pipe from that area and asked that it be included in the study. It was explained that State Representative Barrett and Senator Hinds submitted requests up to \$1.9 Million from the state. The situation is believed to be related to climate change, and it was noted that the House of Representatives and Senate put in additional money for seawalls due to climate change similar to those experienced in Berkshire County. *Tom Robinson, 9 Grant Street* advised that the problem on Grant Street originates on Cross Street from a pipe that comes down from Friend Street and enters into manhole on Cross Street at a pressure that has destroyed the manhole. He explained this is also an engineering issue, and gave his opinion on how it can be resolved. *Bob Wynn, an Engineer from VHB* gave information on the problems that were studied that need to be addressed to get the water to flow properly. *Stephanie Puck, 97 North Summer Street* inquired what plans are being put in place so flooding doesn't happen again, and noted the kids are not getting picked up by the school bus due to flooding. It was explained that in her immediate area a manhole had collapsed and has since been rebuilt and during the last few rainstorms there has been no flooding there at all. The manhole in front of the DPW was rebuilt, and others were cleaned. The steps taken for notification of the school and bus companies when flooding determines a road needs to be closed were given. It was clarified that the funding State Representative Barrett and Senator Hinds put in for is for issues with the Town infrastructure, channeling water and rip rapping to alleviate the problem but the state budget does not assist with cleaning out someone's back yard. Flood insurance will fix a house but not the land. Rip rapping will require easements to access private property. It was explained that the betterment district has been discussed but it has to be assessed a cost and the homeowner would have to pay over a period of time in taxes, as it is not a grant program. The Town is looking very aggressively at what grant programs are out there, and because this storm was Adams specific there are not much out there. *Kevin Towle, Executive Assistant to the Interim Town Administrator* advised that the Council on Aging can help with grant process applications. One option is through the Salvation Army for grocery or heating assistance while a homeowner is focusing on the emergency. The Berkshire Taconic Foundation Neighbor to Neighbor Grant of up to \$500 may be an option for those eligible. It was noted that the United Way will have a grant program out next week as well. Citizens were requested to support the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee as they are going through this process by making recommendations and voting at the Special Town Meeting. State Representative Barrett and Senator Hinds' offices will continue to help fight for funding. Citizens were asked to contact the Board of Selectmen or Chairman Duval with any questions or further issues.


ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Member Hoyt to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Bush, Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary


Jim Bush, Member


Joseph Nowak, Vice Chairman


Christine Hoyt, Member


John Duval, Chairman