

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

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 13, 2019**

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TOWN CLERK  
ADAMS MASS.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Duval at 7:00 p.m. Present were Vice Chairman Nowak, Members Hoyt, and Bush, as well as Interim Town Administrator Cesan.

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

CLERK

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the January 30, 2019 meeting were submitted for approval. *Motion made by Member Hoyt to waive reading and approve the January 30, 2019 minutes as submitted, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** *There were no public comments made by the audience.*

**PUBLIC HEARING: Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing, 7:10 p.m. – Motion made by Member Hoyt to enter into Public Hearing for CDBG, second by Bush. Vote: unanimous.** Interim Town Administrator Cesan provided a brief overview of the FY2019 CDBG Program, the requested amount and the activities going forward in the application. The maximum amount that the Town can apply for is \$800,000 and the deadline is March 1, 2019. The Public Hearing is to solicit public input and Board of Selectman approval for the activities in the application. The first portion of the application is for renewed implementation of the Housing Rehabilitation Program. Over half of the population of Adams is low to moderate income and there is high need for rehab assistance, but the program is very staff intensive. When funded, the Town staff can only typically do twelve to fifteen per grant year. This year the Town has new staff and proposes to do eight units, primarily within the Target Area of Route 8, but applications from other areas would also be welcome. The Town is also proposing the Russell Field Renovation Project, as Russell Field is home to a number of youth sports teams, practice for high school sports and BART Charter School. The Park is in poor condition, with uneven fields causing a tripping hazard and creating a dangerous situation for you players. It needs new turf, drainage improvements, a new backstop, and dugouts. The amounts proposed for this project were reviewed, including staff salaries to administrate the work. If approved, it could be put out to bid in the fall and work would be done through spring of 2020. *Community Development Program Manager Ferguson* explained the design program. Improvements would be done to the entire Russell Field park. The playing fields would be relocated back from the current position to create more room. New dugouts with protective fencing will be built in, new efficient lighting, with funds from a separate Green Communities Grant, and accessible walkways and entrances would be created. Tennis courts would be reconstructed, repainted and marked also for pickle ball. She gave an overview of features and amenities, including a new tot play area and an adult fitness station. The current entrance will be made accessible and the poor condition of this entrance will be improved. There would also be improved drainage for the field, and new fencing installed around the perimeter. Youth softball and football leagues will still have the same use of the playing fields after renovations, only it will be made safer and better. It was noted that these are the only tennis courts in town and worth investing in. *Parks Commission Chairman Cernik* advised that the need for Russell Field has grown over the past seven years. He emphasized the need to update this park. He noted that numerous representatives from each sports group met to give input to the Commission and incorporate every generation's recommendations for safety purposes and give more access. Russell Field is not currently ADA compliant and has limited access. This project will allow it to be upgraded to be ADA compliant. Adding an adult fitness area will add more use to the fields. He asked the Board for approval. Board Members noted that this renovation to the park has been long overdue and that it has been a problem that the balls go over the backstop and into the road, almost hitting cars. The fence has a little overhang but balls escape out around the first baseline. The current backstop is not regulation and not adequate, so it is planned to be addressed. It was pointed out that there won't be enough funds in this phase to work on the building, but it will hopefully be able to be addressed in future phases. A suggestion was made to improve the existing pavilion on the hill for people to use to get out of the sun or rain. The current state of the



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landscaping was noted as being concerning and there are plans to create handicapped entrance ways and an access to the bike trail. None of the entrance ways are currently accessible and they will be gradual and will meet the ADA requirements. The building and potentially portions of the perimeter walkway could be done at a later phase. Drainage in left field was discussed and it was noted that Guntlow & Associates is looking into the drainage issue and improvements are in the plans. The timing of construction was again discussed and if granted, the Town could put the project out to bid in September or October 2019, but will be tight. The Town will need to work with the Parks Commission and the leagues on timing since work cannot happen during winter months. Parks Commission Chair Cernik advised there will be a lot of coordination between the leagues and he didn't see it as an issue in the fall because they share fields. He advised he will navigate the coordination as needed so that other arrangements are in place for games and practice while the Town completes renovation work, if the project is funded. The sharing of Hoosac Valley High School fields was suggested as a potential option if they are not playing on them or utilizing the fields for a temporary solution. It was noted that the Town is lacking in softball and practice fields. Brief discussion took place regarding whether the Little League field was designed to hold state championships and whether this field would be able to hold tournament games. It has not been discussed at the Parks Commission yet. It was noted that the field must be lighted and updated. Council on Aging Director Girgenti noted that she has been active and on the board for the *Age Friendly Berkshires* and the upgrades to Russell Field would make a wonderful impact on the Age Friendly Berkshires. She noted that creative thinking went into the design, no area of the park was wasted and parking was considered. She pointed out that there are some exciting items like the adult playground, which proposes to have outdoor weather-durable exercise equipment, and this will be very attractive helping the Town's seniors stay active. She pointed out that Pickle Ball is a fast growing sport in the United States and leagues are forming in the area but there are no courts available. It was observed that the tennis courts are always busy, and tennis coaching takes place on the Russell Field courts. It was also pointed out that the playground needs upgrades. She also praised the design to make the area safer for children. Fencing is needed to protect cars, as fly balls are always a risk. It was noted that this project is a huge selling point to new families and those looking to retire in the area as it is walkable to the downtown of Adams and alongside and accessible to the bike trail. It was explained that both of the program activities are consistent with recommendations of the Town's Community Development strategy which the Town endorsed in 2018, as well as the Adams Open Space Plan. Final costs will be narrowed down over the next couple weeks but the Board was requested to approve the activities for the FY2019 Grant application. ***Motion made by Member Hoyt to exit Public Hearing, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous. Motion made by Member Hoyt to approve the FY2019 proposed program activities for the CDBG Grant Application for the maximum amount of \$800,000, second by Member Bush. Vote: unanimous.***

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Discussion on Town Administrator Candidate Interview Session Agenda:** *Member Hoyt* advised that there are three finalists for the Town Administrator position who will be interviewed on Saturday, February 16, 2019 at 9:00 a.m., 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. to go over the process with the Consultant. The Consultant submitted a draft of potential questions based on interviews he had conducted as a guide, and asked Board Members to prepare questions with items of interest for Saturday. It was noted that the session will open to the public. Board Members clarified how many questions each would ask, and how many questions to prepare. It was noted that the content of the questions should stay the same but tailored to each candidate. Past Town Administrator interviewing processes were reviewed.

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**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

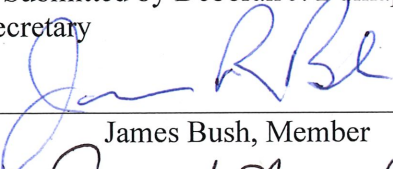
**Town Administrator Report:** The Adams Parks Commission had scheduled a public presentation on the proposed improvements for Russell Field on Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. but due to the winter storm that evening it was necessary to reschedule the public presentation until Monday, February 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. here at Town Hall. The proposed park renovations will be presented by the Town's design engineer, Guntlow & Associates, Inc., who is currently working to complete bid-ready plans for the project to submit as part of the Town's CDBG application. The public is encouraged to participate in the meeting.

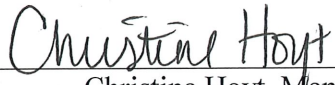
**SUB-COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:** *Member Hoyt* announced there is an application for a Ribbon Cutting for the Grand Re-Opening of Jeepers Creepers, on Saturday, February 23, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. *Member Bush* advised he was available to attend.

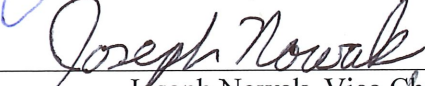
**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER:** *Chairman Duval* announced information about Read across America Day where those interested read aloud to the children at Hoosac Valley Elementary School on March 1, 2019. Those interested were directed to call the Hoosac Valley Elementary School to reserve their spot.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Motion made by Member Bush to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Hoyt.*  
*Vote: Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.*

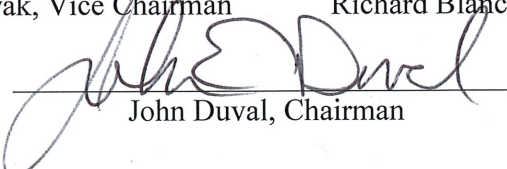
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary

  
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James Bush, Member

  
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Christine Hoyt, Member

  
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Joseph Nowak, Vice Chairman

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Richard Blanchard, Member

  
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John Duval, Chairman