

THOMPSON BOARD OF FINANCE  
TOWN OF THOMPSON  
Library Community Center  
September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
7:00 p.m.

Minutes

**I. ROLL CALL:**

- Chairman Raymond Faucher, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
- **Members present:** Raymond Faucher Jr., Laurent Guillot, Susanne Witkowski, Aaron McGarry, and Paul Dery.
- **Absent:** Larry Groh, Jr.
- **Also present:** Paul Lenky, Orla Rafferty, Dr. Jolin, members of the public, member of the press.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- A motion was made by Larry Guillot to approve the minutes from the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Thompson Board of Finance meeting. This motion was seconded by Susanne Witkowski. Ray Faucher noted two slight corrections: The first being that under section VII, the Town Financial Update, it was stated that “Expenses from the town alone will only be about \$75,000.” This should have read “\$75,000 over budget.” The second clarification was that no comprehensive audit for the retiring Finance Director would take place because no motion was made by a member of the Board of Finance, not because Ray Faucher decided that there wouldn’t be one as the original phrasing may have been misleading.

Paul Dery – Abstain, All others present voted in favor – **Motion Passed**

**III. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- Mr. Faucher received correspondence from Dr. Jolin concerning a surplus account that the Board of Education was looking for the Board of Finance to establish. Mr. Faucher printed and handed out sheets of paper which had the last 10 years’ worth of monies which had been returned to the town. Mr. Faucher then stated that this will be taken up under “New Business” later in the meeting.
- Paul Dery stated that he had received correspondence from Rene Waldron but did not have it with him for the meeting. Mr. Faucher stated that Mr. Dery could bring it up next meeting.

**IV. CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

- None.

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Before moving on to the “Selectman’s Update”, Mr. Faucher formally introduced the new Finance Director Orla Rafferty to the rest of the Board and to the town. Mrs. Rafferty stated that she started her work as Finance Director for the town on Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Dr. Jolin also welcomed Mrs. Rafferty to town.

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**V. PAUL LENKY - SELECTMAN’S UPDATE:**

- Mr. Lenky began his update by stating that he had received the September report from the Building Official with permits valued at \$360,672 and with permit fees at \$3,643.

- CLA, who is working with Marianapolis, recommended CB Utility as the company to award the bids for the Marianapolis Sewer Project. Mr. Lenky continued by stating that on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 there was a pre-construction meeting which raised questions about when they could begin the line-boring for the project. Mr. Lenky further explained that they are still waiting for Marianapolis to post the bond that they need to post. If everything gets done in a timely fashion they hope to begin the line-boring before the end of October. However, the company did have concerns about the weather if the process to begin the line-boring ends up taking longer than anticipated.
- Mr. Lenky also stated that he sat down with Mary Ann Chinatti, the Town Planner, and was given an update on the grants in town. Mr. Lenky began the grants update with the Brownfield Grant for the Belding Site. Mr. Lenky stated that the Town/State contract was sent to Attorney St. Onge and that he had reviewed it, added his remarks, and sent it back to Mary Ann Chinatti. They will now send the remarks to the State. Mr. Lenky also stated that they are looking into the installation of 3-phase power to run from Plum Road through Route 12 to Reardon Road which is estimated to cost approximately \$480,000. They are also hoping to have a tenant in by next June. Also, the Community Fire Department needs construction of a new storage area which is estimated to cost around \$500,000 as their floor is beginning to cave in. Mr. Lenky continued by stating that there was a meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in regards to the Quaddick Road Bridge. Mr. Lenky explained that the federal government wants the town to do an engineering study at a cost of \$200,000 with a chance that they won't get the grant and, if it does get go through, might not happen for two years. Mr. Lenky stated that this is not acceptable and the alternative is a 50/50 grant where they would receive \$275,000 and the town would have to match. Mr. Lenky was also told that the bridge is now deteriorating at a faster rate even though the head walls remain in good shape. The Gladys Green/Pineview Court Phase III has had the Town/state Agreement signed by the Town and forwarded to the State for its execution. Mr. Lenky also noted that the Old Rissor Mill is on an historical site so it is up to the people down there to work to keep it in compliance. The West Thompson Fire Department's roof money has still not come in yet.
- Mr. Lenky stated that the TWPCA raised their rates by \$65.
- Mr. Lenky explained that the Interim ZEO has been able to do his job effectively in less hours than it has taken in the past so they are posting the position as a 15-hour a week job rather than 20 hours. Mr. Faucher asked if the union had signed off on it and Mr. Lenky responded that they had not yet.
- Elizabeth Vriga, Selectmen's Secretary, is retiring October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 and Mr. Lenky explained that this job will also be restructured and posted.
- The new Probate Court will be having an open-house on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 4:00-6:00 PM.
- Mr. Lenky stated that the Library Curbing bids end on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and that they had received 1 bid so far.
- Paul Dery asked Mr. Lenky if the Thompson Hill Road sale to the estate of Trinity Foundation has any impact on the Marianapolis Sewer Project and Mr. Lenky responded that it did not.
- Susanne Witkowski asked for clarification as to what property they were speaking about and Paul Dery responded 281 Thompson Hill Road on Route 200.

## **VI. DR. JOLIN - SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE:**

- Dr. Jolin began by stating that school has begun, everything so far in regards to the new school year is going well, and that he had only heard of two bus complaints so far which is always a good sign.
- Dr. Jolin introduced Mr. Neil Breen as the new Business Manager, stated that Mr. Breen started in July, and that he expects everyone to see some substantial improvements in their financial recording moving forward.
- Dr. Jolin spoke regarding the deforestation of the hill at Tourtellotte by explaining that it is a grant-funded project which was suggested by the State Police for security purposes. Dr. Jolin continued by stating that the Facilities Director assures him that the hill will look better by the spring.
- Larry Guillot asked if he could see the State Police report on the line-of-site because he believes it looks quite over-done. Dr. Jolin responded that there were some regulations where certain trees had to stay because living animals were making their homes in them and that he was unsure whether or not he could release the report/analysis to the public because it actually outlines both strengths and weaknesses of the school from a security standpoint. Dr. Jolin also stated that they are applying for another round of security grants.
- Larry Guillot voiced concerns that whoever cut down the trees may have benefited from doing so.
- Susanne Witkowski asked Dr. Jolin if he agrees that the deforested hill doesn't look very good and Dr. Jolin responded that he does agree and that they will try to get the stumps to ground level. Dr. Jolin continued by stating that he has encountered people on both sides of the issue; those who praise the efforts from a security standpoint as well as those who believe it to be an eye-sore.
- Larry Guillot asked if the contract said to take the stumps to ground level when cutting down these trees and Dr. Jolin responded that they were told that they would save money by doing that part by themselves.
- Paul Dery brought up an e-mail that he had received from Rene Waldron pertaining to the amount of money that recreation pays for miles driven for busses. Mr. Dery stated that he believed the amount to be \$1.50 per mile and that he believes that they should be looking at this amount once again. Mr. Breen responded that he had received the same e-mail from Rene Waldron and believed the amount to be \$1.75 per mile last summer and that he had asked her to stick with that amount. He also stated that by his rough calculations it would be right around \$3.02 per mile.
- Mr. Dery stated that he presumes there is likely some reimbursement and that he believes with IEPs there are sometimes students on the busses that will save them from having to transport those students to other sites which saves them money as well but that it should all be looked at very carefully. Mr. Dery further stated that they should see what the reimbursement is and it should be more defined.
- Susanne Witkowski stated that if the summer program is meeting their costs and not spending the money then it'll come back to them anyways. Ray Faucher responded that with the surplus account they've been criticized in the past but also stated that if there is an excess with the Recreation Department he would have no problem taking it back and using it for tax relief as everyone is in this together. Mr. Faucher also praised them for

their efficiency and stated that the Recreation Department is a great asset to the town. He stressed, however, that it is important to find out what the real number is.

- Paul Dery asked if the school rents a stall at the town garage does the State reimburse them for that. Dr. Jolin responded that they would have to check on that.
- Ray Faucher asked Dr. Jolin about enrollment numbers and Dr. Jolin responded that the number of students was 1019. Mr. Faucher asked if there were concerns about this and Dr. Jolin stated that a report by the State concluded that they will not do negative sanctions, only positive incentives.

#### **VII. ORLA RAFFERTY - TOWN FINANCIAL UPDATE:**

- Mrs. Rafferty stated that she preferred not to comment until she has reviewed everything but would answer any questions. Ray Faucher asked when they should put the audit report on the agenda and Mrs. Rafferty responded in November.

#### **VIII. TOURTELLOTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATE:**

- Dr. Jolin stated that they are continuing the ongoing work and there is no real update.

#### **IX. OLD BUSINESS:**

- None.

#### **X. NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **A.) UNEXPENDED EDUCATION FUND ACCOUNT:**

- Dr. Jolin handed out a packet which shows what different towns in Connecticut use this type of account for.
- Dr. Jolin stated that some towns like to restrict these accounts and that these accounts will be an incentive to save in the case of emergencies and to be conservative. Also, different cities and towns do this in different ways but often for Capital Expenditures.
- Larry Guillot asked Dr. Jolin if this is under your control, how can we limit this for certain things and what does this really say? Dr. Jolin responded that other towns restrict but it doesn't say within the law. Larry Guillot then stated that he would just assume that they keep things as they currently are.
- Ray Faucher stated that they usually have done a great job in the past but that he was shocked that this year \$87,000 was returned to the town. Mr. Faucher also stated that he believed this was because they were in between Business Managers but that if they got things back to where they need to be then he agrees with Mr. Guillot that this is, essentially, unnecessary. Mr. Faucher continued, however, by stating that he would like more time to review the proposed fund. Larry Guillot added that he would like to see the Board of Finance receive a legal opinion on the matter.
- Dr. Jolin reiterated that he believes the intent of the proposed fund would be as a rainy-day fund.
- Mr. Faucher stated that he will contact Attorney St. Onge and will have answers next month.
- Paul Dery suggested that they contact some of the other towns to see how they use the fund.
- A brief discussion took place between Mr. Breen, Mr. McGarry, and Dr. Jolin regarding whether or not the 1% total is cumulative or limited to the year. It was agreed that this was made fairly unclear. Dr. Jolin stated that he would try to find the answer to that concern.

**B.)BUDGET TRANSFERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014:**

- A motion was made by Ray Faucher to approve a transfer of funds increase of \$82,630 to cover the following areas: Town Clerk, Town Counsel, Town Garage, Snow Removal, Economic Community Development, and Municipal Insurance. This motion was seconded by Aaron McGarry.  
All present voted in favor – **Motion Passed**
- A motion made by Ray Faucher to approve a transfer of funds decrease of \$82,630 from the following areas: Fire Departments, Transfer Station, and Fringe Benefits. This motion was seconded by Aaron McGarry.  
All present voted in favor – **Motion Passed**

**ADJOURN:**

- A motion was made by Larry Guillot to adjourn at 8:00 PM. This motion was seconded by Paul Dery. All present voted in favor – **Motion Passed**

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Richardson, Recording Secretary