



TOWN of
THOMPSON
BOARD OF FINANCE

Minutes: Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 17, 2016
Thompson Library/Community Center
7:00 PM

p. 1 of 5

Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

I. Roll call

- A. Members Present: Ray Faucher, Jr., Larry Groh, Jr., Aaron McGarry, Rhonda Rooney, Susanne Witkowski.
- B. Members Absent: Jim Bellavance (Informed Chairman Aaron McGarry that he would be absent.)
- C. Staff Present:
Tina Fox, Recording Secretary
Orla McKiernan-Rafferty, Finance Director
- D. Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Approve Minutes

- A. February 18, 2016
 - 1. **Ray Faucher moved and Larry Groh, Jr. seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2016 meeting with the following correction:**
 - a. The date should be changed on every page to read February 18, 2016.
 - Ray Faucher, Jr.- Abstain Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes Aaron McGarry- Yes
 - Rhonda Rooney- Yes Susanne Witkowski- Yes
 - The motion carried.**
 - Ray Faucher, Jr. abstained because he was not present at the meeting.
- B. March 3, 2016
 - 1. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Rhonda Rooney seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2016 meeting as written.**
 - Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes Aaron McGarry- Yes
 - Rhonda Rooney- Yes Susanne Witkowski- Yes
 - The motion carried unanimously.**
- C. March 10, 2016 (6:00 PM)
 - 1. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2016 meeting at 6:00 PM as written.**
 - Ray Faucher, Jr.- Abstain Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes Aaron McGarry- Yes
 - Rhonda Rooney- Yes Susanne Witkowski- Yes
 - The motion carried.**
 - Ray Faucher, Jr. abstained because he was not present at the meeting.

D. March 10, 2016 (7:00 PM)

1. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2016 meeting at 7:00 PM with the following correction:**

- a. Under Citizen's Comments, Paul Baer referred to State statute 10-222, rather than 10-22. He did not provide the statute to the Board, but did reference the statute.

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

III. Correspondence

- A. Memo from First Selectman requesting the appropriation of funds for the Quaddick Rd. Bridge.

IV. Citizen's Comments

- A. Shawn Brissette, 21 Fairway Dr., Board of Education (BOE) member, stated that there were comments from citizens at the previous meeting about financial struggle. He stated that every year at the budget workshops he sees the same kinds of things happen, and would like to know when the Town will start looking at the needs of the Town to grow. In regards to the Economic Development Commission (EDC) budget, he would like the Town to consider hiring a full-time Economic Development Coordinator, even if \$100,000-\$150,000 has to be spent. He stated that there should be an entire budget to build the economy in Thompson. He stated that the previous administration passed on the Putnam Tech Park, and it should be looked into if it is still a viable option. He stated that the Town should be thinking about long-term solutions, and not just about this year.
- B. Paul Baer, Thompson Rd., asked if the BOF is in compliance with State statute 10-222 which states that the BOF must look at the BOE budget line by line and make recommendations in writing to the BOE within ten days of looking at the budget. P. Baer stated that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) presented salary amounts for Assessors from certain Connecticut Towns which they compiled through CCM, but that the numbers on the report are skewed because it includes Towns such as Old Lyme, Litchfield, Beacon Falls, and Woodbridge (with a median household income of \$134,000 per year). P. Baer stated that the BOS did not look at Towns that have Thompson's median income. He stated that there was discussion to add a part-time position and to train the person to become an Assessor, but that in the private sector, that person would have to sign an agreement stating that they would continue working for a certain number of years or must pay the company back for the training. He stated that it would be a difficult position for the Town, and it would be a better idea to increase the existing Assessor Clerk position from 30 to 35 hours per week and have a part-time Assessor. P. Baer stated that the added position in the Tax Office was supposed to have floating hours, and perhaps the Assessor's Office may need the third position now with that position floating from the Assessor's Office instead of the Tax Office. He stated that there should be a return on investment for taxpayers, where the budget should be focused on creating vibrancy and attracting businesses. P. Baer stated that 65 Main St. is the Town's own property and it has been allowed to decay because the Town did not abide by the deed restrictions. He provided the Board with information on how the report from the Library that is sent to the State regarding the Library's budget is supposed to be filled out. He stated that the BOE should come prepared to budget meetings to answer questions from the BOF, because it is a waste of time to wait for the information.

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Regarding the cost in the proposed budget to be a member of the Council of Small Towns, P. Baer stated that he thought that the Town pays and elects officials to be our representatives in Hartford. P. Baer stated that the contractor that was chosen for the Quaddick Rd. Bridge has had issues with other Towns, particularly in Southington. He stated that Southington had too many delays with the contractor and cancelled their contract, and then took legal action against the contractor to be awarded \$150,000 in damages. P. Baer stated that the Town has a recurring problem where contracts have not been enforced and choosing this contractor could lead to the same problem.

- C. A. McGarry stated that members of the audience can ask questions related to the budget, or write down those questions to give to the Board during Citizen's Comments.

V. Ken Beausoleil: Selectman's Update: None

VI. Dr. Michael Jolin: Education Update

- A. Dr. Jolin stated that the healthcare and worker's comp amounts in the BOE budget are coming in lower than expected, for a savings of approximately \$187,000.
- B. N. Breen stated that the BOE has a broker who looks at different health insurance plans, but they are looking at switching brokers for a savings of \$10,000.
- C. R. Rooney asked if the BOE uses HRA's, to which Dr. Jolin responded that he will look into the possibility.

VII. Orla McKiernan-Rafferty: Financial Update

- A. O. McKiernan-Rafferty provided a verbal update to the Board regarding the financial report. She stated that she will have a better feel if surplus funds will be needed to balance the budget toward the end of March.

VIII. Board of Trustees of the Tourtellotte Fund

- A. Joe Lindley stated that there have been no changes since the last report, and reminded the Board that they will need to approve the Trustees recommendation of \$75,000 for the coming year.
- B. J. Lindley explained that \$750,000 has been spent on repairing the building and the project is not half way done, and for decades, there was no money in the BOE budget that was used for the building.
- C. Dr. Jolin explained that when the building of the new school began, there was a caveat by the State that the Tourtellotte building could not be used for classrooms. J. Lindley added that about a third of the building is not able to be used because there is not an external egress. Dr. Jolin stated that the building is still used for school department offices, curriculum development offices, and the Ryscavage auditorium is in the process of being renovated.

IX. New Business

- A. Request for Additional Funding: Quaddick Rd. Bridge (\$69,247.68)
 - 1. K. Beausoleil explained that the amount that the BOF allocated previously was not enough to cover the Town's portion of the project, and that the lowest bid that came in was for \$377,000, excluding contingency and engineering. He also suggested that the funds come from the paving account that still holds \$191,241.
 - 2. R. Faucher asked if K. Beausoleil received confirmation from the State that they will match the Town funds for the project, to which K. Beausoleil replied affirmatively.

3. Leo Adams, Director of Public Works, stated that the State tests the bridge every year and it is deteriorating underneath and getting worse. He also stated that he has about \$100,000 worth of projects to come out of the paving funds before the end of the fiscal year.
4. **Ray Faucher, Jr. moved and Larry Groh, Jr. seconded the motion to approve a transfer of \$69,247.68 from the current paving account to be used for the completion of the Quaddick Road Bridge project.**
 - a. L. Groh, Jr. wished to make it clear that the account is a transfer account, so if the funds go unused, they carry over to the next year.

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

X. Old Business

A. Oil Spill at Town Garage

1. K. Beausoleil stated that the project is almost complete. The actual bill is for \$117,926.58. He stated that he is still working on appealing the insurance company's denial.

A. Oil Spill at School

1. Dr. Jolin stated that there is a meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 between the BOE and Town attorneys, with the Chair of the BOE and the First Selectman to discuss how to proceed with the lawsuit. The meeting is not open to the public.
2. Bill Birch stated that DEEP has moved the situation from "Emergency Response" to "Remediation."
3. R. Faucher, Jr. asked about an invoice that was received at a Building Committee meeting for \$151,000 for services from January 2015 - July 2015. B. Birch answered that the bill was received at the school the day before the Building Committee received it, and he has asked the company to provide bills in a timely manner from now on. When asked about the amount approved at Referendum versus the amount that the project is actually costing, B. Birch answered that consulting and attorney fees were not originally considered.
4. Dr. Jolin stated that the BOE needed to follow the advice of attorneys and consultants so that the situation did not end up worse.
5. R. Faucher, Jr. asked O. McKiernan-Rafferty to look into overall costs to the Town for bonds varying in amount from \$500,000 to 1 million dollars, over 5 to 15 years.

XI. Budget Workshop

- A. O. McKiernan-Rafferty distributed a handout indicating changes that have been made to the proposed budget since the previous meeting, bringing the proposed mill rate to 27.40.
- B. Town Hall Building: K. Beausoleil proposed moving the proposed new part-time Highway Maintainer at \$22,422 to a new part-time maintenance worker at Town Hall at \$14,133. He stated that Town Hall is long over-due for a maintenance worker. He also stated that the cleaning service at Town Hall would continue, and that the Highway Department currently does maintenance work at Town Hall. The Board allowed the part-time Highway Maintainer at \$22,422 to be removed from the proposed budget, and the part-time maintenance worker at \$14,133 to be added to the Town Hall budget.
 1. The Board allowed \$1,000 to be added under Service Contracts for necessary inspections of the elevator.

2. The Board agreed that the Historical Society should present a profit and loss statement for their gift shop before an additional \$1,000 is added to the budget under Costs/Repairs Rental Property for the heating of the Historical Society building.
- E. Fire Marshal: The Board allowed an overall increase of \$76 to this budget, with K. Beausoleil explaining that the Fire Marshal is likely to charge the Town for office supplies this year, which does not occur every year.

II. Adjourn

- A. **Susanne Witkowski moved and Larry Groh, Jr. seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 8:56 PM.

Tina Fox
Recording Secretary