



TOWN of
THOMPSON
BOARD OF FINANCE

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

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

I. Roll call

- A. Members Present: Jim Bellavance, Ray Faucher, Jr., Larry Groh, Jr., Aaron McGarry, Rhonda Rooney, and Susanne Witkowski.
- B. Members Absent: None
- C. Staff Present:
 - Tina Fox, Recording Secretary
 - Orla McKiernan-Rafferty, Finance Director
- D. Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Approve Minutes

- A. Ray Faucher, Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to approve the minutes of October 20, 2016 with the following corrections:**

- 1. Page 1, Section IV(B): The name of the deceased resident that Paul Baer was speaking about should be omitted.

Jim Bellavance- Yes	Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes	Ray Faucher, Jr.-Yes
Aaron McGarry- Yes	Rhonda Rooney- Yes	Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

III. Correspondence

- A. Emails from Neal Breen regarding the dental fund and School Readiness Tuition.
- B. Email from Tina Fox regarding Annual Report.
- C. Two emails from Noel Lafayette regarding a solar project.
- D. Schedule of 2017 meeting from Tina Fox.

IV. Citizen's Comments: None

V. Kenneth Beausoleil: Selectmen's Update

- A. K. Beausoleil stated that the Highway Department paved Reardon Rd. Repairs were made on Linehouse Rd. and will be made on Fabyan Rd. There is no agreement related to the Marianapolis Sewer project as to how to drill under the highway. Alternate routes are being explored. Estimated costs are \$2.3 million for that phase. The Town Attorney would like to have a joint meeting with the Board of Finance (BOF) and Board of Selectmen (BOS) to bring the BOF up-to-date on some legal issues. It would be a good time for the Town Attorney to brief the Board regarding the insurance claim for the oil spill at the Town Garage. Work is being done to find the best way to utilize the \$50,000 placed in the Economic Development Commission (EDC) budget, and there have been meetings with CERC and a private consultant regarding that. A developer has interest in demolishing the River Mill at 929 Riverside Dr. The BOS passed a resolution in

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

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opposition to the demolition. The State Historic Preservation Office is opposed to the demolition as well.

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- B. S. Witkowski asked if there are currently businesses in the River mill, to which K. Beausoleil responded that there are a few businesses in the east end of the building.
- C. R. Faucher, Jr. asked if the Trinity Foundation has agreed to cover the extra cost of the Marianapolis Sewer project, to which K. Beausoleil answered affirmatively.
- D. J. Bellavance asked for an update on the Brownfield grant at the Belding Mill. K. Beausoleil answered that the project is nearing completion, and there should be a public informational meeting sometime in January.
- E. L. Groh, Jr. asked for clarification regarding the BOS stance on the demolition of the River Mill. K. Beausoleil stated that the BOS passed a resolution stating that they are not in favor of the demolition of the mill. S. Herbert stated that they were opposed to the demolition if it is just to salvage materials, but not opposed if the plan was to develop the property.

VI. Dr. Michael Jolin: Education Update

- A. Dr. Jolin stated that an RFP for bus services went out that day. The request is for proposals, and the Board of Education (BOE) has made no decision as of yet. The process will be inclusive; the BOE does not intend to make a unilateral decision. Regarding the reimbursement from the State for the oil tank, a \$1,900 discrepancy may have been found, but it is being looked into. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that the funds for the reimbursement should be in by the end of the week. Dr. Jolin stated that the work on the budget has begun. He will email the dates for the budget workshops to the BOF. There is also a plan to invite the BOF for another tour of the complex.
- B. R. Rooney asked what the school does to set itself apart from other schools to make students want to attend Tourtellotte. In response, Dr. Jolin briefly discussed the school's communications plan.

VII. Orla McKiernan-Rafferty: Financial Report

- A. O. McKiernan-Rafferty provided a verbal report on Town finances through the end of October.
- B. R. Faucher, Jr. asked what items comprise the fire departments budget. O. McKiernan-Rafferty listed the following in response: 911 service, fire hydrants, CT Water, the allocation to each fire department, insurance, OSHA mandated testing, refunds to fire fighters tax abatements, software, NECCOG paramedic service, and burn officer expenses.

VIII. Board of Trustees of the Tourtellotte Fund

- A. Joe Lindley stated that an RFP was developed for the window project and will be sent out soon. A request for a year-to-date report was sent to the Trust manager. A request for a re-variance was sent to the State to address the auditorium and doors. Window installation should begin in 2018.

IX. New Business

- A. Discussion of the Potential Hire of a Professional Fire Consultant
 - 1. K. Beausoleil stated that he did not have the information he needed for the Tuesday BOS meeting. He received a verbal estimate late this afternoon, which was \$10,000 for the cost of hiring a Fire Consultant. It would take 30-45 days to complete the project. He will come back to the BOF with a formal proposal when it is ready.

2. R. Faucher, Jr. asked if the BOS was planning to develop an RFP for this. K. Beausoleil answered that a bid is not required if the amount is under \$10,000, but that he is exploring the option.
 3. R. Rooney asked if there would be some plan of action for the EDC study before next budget season. K. Beausoleil answered that EDC is moving forward with a branding study facilitated by NECCOG.
- B. Consultant for Fire Department Study Funding (Discussed under previous agenda item)
- C. Update on Privatization of the Thompson School Busing
1. S. Witkowski asked what the process will be after the bids come back. Dr. Jolin stated that the BOE will contact the First Selectman and the BOF Chair to get input. An attorney who has handled this type of situation is being consulted. The decision will be an inclusive decision involving all three boards (BOF, BOE, and BOS).
- D. School Dental Fund
1. N. Breen stated that the Finance Director advised the BOE of what to contribute to the dental fund shared by the Town and BOE, and the BOE makes monthly contributions. The fund is potentially over-funded. The Finance Director will likely have to do a full reconciliation to determine the status of the fund.
 2. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that she will work with the dental insurance provider to determine how much should be in the fund. The auditors were previously reluctant to the change because they wanted the Town and BOE to do their due diligence first. It is both the BOE and Town that may have over-funded. She explained that employees pay a contribution depending on their plan. The Town pays the majority. Union and non-union positions have different contribution rates. The rates are set by the insurance company. Each year the insurance agent advises what the Town and BOE should contribute to the fund. They may determine that the premium rate being charged is too high, and/or they may determine that some of the money in the fund should go back to the BOE and Town. She would like the support of the auditors before making any changes.
 3. Dr. Jolin thanked N. Breen and O. McKiernan-Rafferty for their diligence in keeping track of this.
- E. MS4 Storm Water Permit Funding
1. K. Beausoleil stated that an MS4 Storm Water permit is required by the DEEP and was not budgeted for. The permit has to be completed by the end of March. In the past, Thompson was cited and paid penalties for not completing the permit. The estimation is between \$10,000 and \$15,000 for the entire process. The BOS agreed to bring this to the attention of the BOF, but an exact cost has not been determined as of yet. One estimate that was received was \$12,200.
- F. 2017 Meeting Schedule
1. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion to approve the 2017 regular meeting schedule and 2017 budget workshop scheduled as presented and read.**
Jim Bellavance- Yes 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. Town Garage Oil Spill- Insurance Claim

1. A. McGarry stated that this can be discussed when the BOF meets with the Town Attorney.

B. Fire Department Equipment Funding

1. K. Beausoleil stated that four out of the five fire departments have factored into their budgets their immediate needs. The BOS made a motion to approach BOF for the funding of \$48,600 just for Community Fire.
2. Ray Faucher, Jr. moved and Jim Bellavance seconded the motion to fund the \$48,600 worth of necessary gear for Community Fire Department to be taken out of undesignated surplus.
 - a. L. Groh, Jr. stated that the amount should be added to the agenda before moving forward.
 - b. R. Faucher, Jr. and J. Bellavance rescinded their motion and second.
3. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Rhonda Rooney seconded the motion to put on the agenda a request for funding of \$48,600 for the purchase of fire equipment under Old Business item B(1).**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

B(1) Request for Funding of \$48,600 for the Purchase of Fire Equipment

1. **Ray Faucher, Jr. moved and Jim Bellavance seconded the motion to expend not to exceed \$48,600 for updated gear for Community Fire Department to be taken out of undesignated surplus.**

- a. A. McGarry stated that the funds were for turnout gear, scott bottles, and ladders.

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

C. School Readiness Tuition

1. N. Breen explained that the School Readiness program provides grant funding for preschool programs, which is supplemented by fees from parents. The funds from parents are required to be used for the program itself. A few years ago, it was discovered that the funds were being used in the general fund, and the school was instructed to recoup the money for 2013 and 2014, as well as submit a spending plan of those funds to the State. The program could be threatened if the situation is not resolved to the State's satisfaction.
2. O. McKiernan-Raftery explained that the auditors were concerned that this is in regards to fiscal years that were audited and given to the State already, and that the Town does not have the support of the auditors to do this.
3. R. Faucher, Jr. asked if the amount could be allocated in the next budget cycle, to which N. Breen and L. Groh, Jr. verbally agreed.

XI. Board of Finance Members Comments: None

XII. Adjourn

A. **Ray Faucher, Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.-Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

B. A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 8:42 PM.

Tina Fox
Recording Secretary