



**TOWN of**  
**THOMPSON**  
**BOARD OF FINANCE**

**Minutes: Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, December 15, 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: Ray Faucher, Jr., Larry Groh, Jr., Aaron McGarry, Rhonda Rooney, and Susanne Witkowski.
- B. Members Absent: Jim Bellavance
- C. Staff Present:
  - Tina Fox, Recording Secretary
  - Orla McKiernan-Rafferty, Finance Director
- D. Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Approve Minutes

- A. Susanne Witkowski moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion to approve the minutes of November 17, 2016 as written.**

Ray Faucher, Jr.-Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

**The motion carried unanimously.**

III. Correspondence

- A. Letter from SHR Energy, attached to these minutes.
- B. Email from Ken Beausoleil to Dr. Jolin regarding the school bus RFP.
- C. Copy of the school bus RFP.
- D. Calendar of meetings for the Board of Education (BOE).
- E. Correspondence related to the school readiness tuition.
- F. Auditors draft report.

IV. Citizen's Comments

- 1. Steve Herbert, Wilsonville Rd., stated that after 14 years, Army beat Navy in football. Also, it was delightful to see the comment of "no material weakness" on the audit report draft. It is very important to see that comment and great to see.
- 2. Paul Baer, Thompson Rd., stated that there is a procedure in place for invoices being paid. The department head has to sign a requisition form, two members of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) must approve and sign it, and then the Finance Director signs it. Invoices were paid that were not signed by a department head. The policy should be enforced and something shouldn't get paid if the requisition is incomplete. The Town spent approximately \$3,000 on legal fees for an attorney to represent an Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) complaint, but the FOI Commission has not issued a civil penalty in at least seven years. Mr. Groh went before the FOI Commission himself to represent the Town. The entire situation could have been handled with a simple phone call. According to minutes of a Building Committee meeting, it was agreed that

**MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

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the Selectmen would fund a Recording Secretary prior to the BOS meeting. They decided who they were going to hire, which is Danielle Pederson.

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No other committee has a paid Recording Secretary. The invoices the Committee is approving are \$374,000+, and they are not elected officials or hired employees. He suggested oversight of the BOF as to the appropriateness of each invoice being paid. One reason given to hire a Recording Secretary was to keep track of RFPs, but that is the responsibility of a secretary, not a Recording Secretary.

3. Ray Faucher, Jr., Red Bridge Rd., stated that when the school experience the oil spill two years ago, the Building Committee was rushed into action to deal with the spill and the aftermath. It was supposed to be a temporary committee. Additional charges have been put upon the Committee, including investigating solar opportunities, removing and replacing two more storage tanks, and replacing the roof at the school. There is going to be a lot of work involved so it made sense to begin having a Recording Secretary. It also made sense to have Danielle Pederson take on the job as she is already the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and will already handle a lot of the same paperwork. The Building Committee is not a little committee and will be dealing with some important issues.

#### V. Audit Report

1. Ronald Nossek gave a presentation on the draft audit report.
2. R. Faucher, Jr. asked about budgeted revenue having an unfavorable variance of (\$183,372), specifically asking if that amount included the oil tank reimbursement fund that was budgeted for and not received until the following fiscal year. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that the \$183,372 did include the oil tank reimbursement.
3. R. Faucher, Jr. asked about the Marianapolis Sewer Project being listed as a capital expense of \$369,380. O. McKiernan-Rafferty answered that the amount is included as an expense for accounting purposes, but the Trinity Foundation is current with the Town in their repaying.
4. Rene Morin, Tax Collector, stated that the unfavorable variance in budgeted revenue of \$183,372 was not because of property taxes, and taxes collected exceeded the budgeted amount for year ending June 30, 2016.
5. A. McGarry asked about OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) and some discussion followed.

#### VI. Kenneth Beausoleil: Selectmen's Update

- A. K. Beausoleil stated that staff has worked well with the audit, and it is a testament to the Finance Department to have this favorable audit. The Starr Rd. issue is proceeding through the appeal process. Transcriptions of the meeting are being done. The union has appealed the arbitration decision to brake away from the defined pension plan and go to the defined 401(k). The State retirement board did not take a stance on the position one way or the other. He has reached out to CCM since Thompson is not the only Town that has broken away. The \$48,600 for Community Fire Department was approved at Town Meeting. Community will submit invoices to the Town to be paid. He spoke to a company about a study on fire services in Town. The BOS is reviewing potentially hiring a consultant for the economic development study, which would require a transfer as the budgeted \$50,000 was put into a labor category.
- B. R. Faucher, Jr. asked about the comment on requisition orders not being executed properly. K. Beausoleil stated that he will go over that with the Finance Director. O. McKiernan-Rafferty stated that she does not believe there were any requisitions not signed by department heads. She sends requisitions back all the time that are not

signed properly. R. Faucher, Jr. stated that there needs to be a checks-and-balances in place going forward.

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- C. K. Beausoleil stated that the school bus RFP had a few issues, which he addressed with Dr. Jolin. Amounts were included in the RFP without discussion. Amendments to the RFP may go out to correct the amounts.

VII. Dr. Michael Jolin: Education Update

- A. Dr. Jolin congratulated O. McKiernan-Rafferty and Neal Breen on the audit report having no material weakness, which is a tribute to their hard work. The BOE recognized and communicated with their attorney that any negotiation regarding the sale of school buses would have to take place with the Town, as well as the use of the Town Garage, and he has an email from the attorney confirming this. It was conveyed to the potential bidders at the pre-bid conference that they would have to negotiate with the Town. New England Association of Schools and Colleges fully accredited the high school for the next five years. The graduation percent is 97.3%, which is among the highest in the area.
- B. A. McGarry stated that the accreditation is great news.

VIII. Orla McKiernan-Rafferty: Financial Report

- A. O. McKiernan-Rafferty congratulated Dr. Jolin on the accreditation and thanked Neal Breen for his work with the audit. She provided a verbal report on Town finances through the end of November.
- B. R. Faucher, Jr. mentioned that some significant obligations would be coming up relating to the Building Committee.
- C. S. Witkowski asked if a new roof at the school would be reimbursable by the State. R. Faucher, Jr. answered that 74.5% of the costs could be reimbursable, but it would first have to be paid by the Town. The oil tanks are also reimbursable, and the solar projects might be reimbursable.
- D. O. McKiernan-Rafferty thanked R. Faucher, Jr. for his effort with the Building Committee. She stated that bills for the oil spill first go to the school to be signed off by Dr. Jolin and/or Bill Birch, then are signed off by the Finance Director, before being reviewed by the Building Committee for payment.

IX. Board of Trustees of the Tourtellotte Fund

- A. Joe Lindley stated that the year end financial review will be on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM at the Town Hall, followed by a public meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>. The RFP for the window replacement project is complete and will be sent to the attorney for review. Their projects are on track and currently under budget.

X. New Business

- A. Request for \$900 for Recording Secretary for Building Committee
1. K. Beausoleil stated that the Building Committee approached the BOS for these funds, and the BOS agreed to approach the BOF.
  2. L. Groh, Jr. stated that he is in agreement, but would suggest to take the funds from contingency.
  3. R. Faucher, Jr. stated that \$900 would cover six meetings at \$150 per meeting.
  4. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to take \$900 out of contingency for the purpose of funding a Recording Secretary for the Building Committee for the remainder of the fiscal year 2017.**
- Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes                      Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes                      Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes                      Susanne Witkowski- Yes  
**The motion carried unanimously.**

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XI. Old Business

A. School Readiness Tuition

1. Neal Breen stated that he contacted the State as requested, and they want the funds recovered and spent in the current fiscal year.
2. There was a discussion about the item. There was a consensus to include this on the January agenda with dollar amounts.

XII. Board of Finance Members Comments: None

XIII. Adjourn

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

Ray Faucher, Jr.-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 8:30 PM.

Tina Fox  
Recording Secretary