



TOWN of THOMPSON
815 Riverside Drive
North Grosvenordale, CT 06255

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2020 FEB 27 A 10:05

Linda Paradise
TOWN CLERK, ASST

THOMPSON Board of Finance Regular Meeting

Thursday, February 20, 2020

Louis P. Faucher Community Center Meeting Room

MINUTES

1. The call to order by Chair Aaron McGarry was at 7:04 PM
2. Members present-Aaron McGarry (Chair), Rob Mann, Rhonda Rooney
Participating by Conference call/speakerphone - Robert Werge
Absent: Steven Herbert (out of town) and Jim Bellavance (medical matter)
Others- Orla McKiernan-Raftery (Finance Director), Melinda Smith (Superintendent of Schools), Amy St Onge (First Selectman), Kathleen Herbert (Chair, BOE), Susanne Witkowski (Selectman), John Rice (Building Committee)
Members of the public, WINY, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst
The Chair confirmed that the speakerphone for Rob Werge was functioning satisfactorily and that a quorum is present.
3. **Motion R. Rooney seconded R. Mann by to approve the January 16, 2020 Regular meeting minutes carried unanimously.**
4. Correspondence: 1). A 02/10/2020 memo from Diane Couture/Assessor's Office was reviewed; an unanticipated \$12,838.32 was collected. 2). Note was made of the school's *Beauty and the Beast* on March 27-29 with an afternoon and 2 evening performances
5. Citizens' comments: Jessica Bolte, 1081 Riverside Dr- advocated for Citizens' Comments to appear near the end of the BOF agenda, for public response to agenda discussion points
6. Selectman's Update-First Selectman Amy St Onge:
 - the budget review process is well underway, with 2 evening review sessions on Tues, Feb 25 and Wed, Feb 26 beginning at 4 PM, providing the opportunity for public participation. The Public Hearing will be on March 5 She requests consideration of a Tri-Board meeting previous to the final steps of the budget creation and after the public hearing
 - Rivermill status looks positive, with DEEP and the EPA determining that "no further action" is necessary. There will be one more year of testing for environmental and water quality issues; work is anticipated to begin in the fall
 - planner Tyra Penn-Gesek has obtained a NE Association of Realtors matching \$5,000 grant for work on the Community Garden at 65 Main; good work on her part!
 - a grant for improving sidewalks will result in RFPs going out on Feb 28 for design work
 - the tax collector has found 30 properties which will need to go to sale for failure to pay taxes. He states that typically, some percentage of these will be resolved before the sale



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actually has to take place

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7. School District update-Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith:
 - enrolment saw a fluctuation of 9 students, in and out of the system, with a decrease of two by the end of the reporting period
 - *Beauty and the Beast*: the District is proud of the community involvement in so many ways. Since Disney does collect a royalty for use of the play, tickets are priced accordingly at \$10
 - several students appeared on WINY to advocate for community involvement during budget season, and they provided information about the important programs offered in the school system
 - Engineering students attended an Aquaponics presentation at Pomfret School; three students will enter a design competition, presenting to a panel of industry leaders
 - Don't miss the Royal Breakfast on Sat, March 14 (expect dragons and princesses) to promote the upcoming show
 - a huge multi-district dance "Turn Up The Volume" will take place on Fri, Feb 28
 - Special Education funding is projected to be over-budget by \$496,418 or 4.89% over-budget, includes transport and tuition for Special Education. Expenses are trending over-budget due to out-of-District placements. Question R, Rooney: transportation costs seem to be trending downward? Yes, but the budget will be overspent.
8. Financial Report- Finance Director Orla McKiernan-Rafoery: 7 months into the year, the collection of property tax is down by \$218,000. Because of the delay with the budget, bills went out later than usual and receipts have had less time to generate earnings. Two grants have come in: the second part of the ECS Grant and the Public Health Grant. Mid-winter building permits are up: \$58,000 shows a significant increase. The surplus was impacted only by the appropriation of funds to the Schools of \$5,931. There are several open purchase orders awaiting payment but by the end of March we will have realistic numbers regarding the surplus. The MERS settlement has been reached after a few years; the private provider of pension funding has sent payment in, within the deadlines. There were no penalties.
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9. Tourtellotte Fund update – Board of Trustees: Orla McKiernan-Rafoery announced a public hearing on Feb 3. Bill Burch provided a Tourtellotte to-do list and Joe Iamartino, Chair, reviewed it. On March 24 the process will be reviewed and Part 2 of the window replacement project will be planned out.
10. New Business:
 - a. As requested by the BOS at their meeting Tues Feb 4, 2020:

"To recommend to the Board of Finance to appropriate up to \$200,000 to help defend and settle the Marianapolis Sewer Project litigation." Chair A. McGarry read the



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statement from the BOS into the record. He reviewed that the BOF has previously entered into Executive Session on this matter and determined that the BOF needs to move ahead. He advocates for doing so at this time.

Motion R. Mann seconded by A. McGarry to allocate up to \$200,000 to defend and settle the litigation regarding the Marianapolis Sewer Project, such funds to be taken from the Fund Balance. Roll call vote: R. Werge – yes

R. Mann – yes A. McGarry – yes R, Rooney – yes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Citizens' Comments on the BOF monthly agenda: Chair A. McGarry noted that in the absence of two members of the BOF, one of whom has verbalized his position on the matter, it seems appropriate to table the agenda item until the next regular meeting. R. Werge concurs, noting that any decision should be all-inclusive of the BOF; this was the consensus of the Board.

11. Old Business:

- a. Fire Advisory Committee update: no report
- b. Community Fire Department update: no report

12. Board of Finance Member Comments: none

13. **Motion R. Rooney seconded by R. Mann to adjourn carried unanimously.**

BOF Chair A. McGarry adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Finance. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.