



TOWN of
THOMPSON
BOARD OF FINANCE

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TOWN OF THOMPSON, CT.
2017 DEC 29 A 11:12
Linda Paradise
TOWN CLERK / Asst.

Minutes: Regular Meeting
Thursday, December 21, 2017
Thompson Library/Community Center
7:00 PM

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Chairman Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

I. Roll call

- A. Members Present: Aaron McGarry, Jim Bellavance, Rhonda Rooney, Susanne Witkowski and Rob Mann.
- B. Members Absent: Larry Groh Jr.
- C. Staff Present: Diane Minarik, Recording Secretary
- D. Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Approve Minutes

- A. October 30, 2017

Rhonda Rooney moved and Jim Bellavance seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2017 meeting as written.
The motion carried unanimously.

III. Correspondence

- Letter from Thompson Rec. Dept. dated 10/26/17
- Letter from Town Clerk dated 11/15/17
- Email from Barry J. Bernabe of Phoenix Advisors, LLC dated 12/18/17 – Bond rating

IV. Citizen's Comments

- Mike Krogul, Walker Dr., just wondering how the additional bills from the bus contract will be handled, through the school budget or will they come back to the BOF.
- Roman Jamison, 56 Taylor Rd, questioned the money in the budget for new buses. K. Beausoleil stated there is \$54K in the budget to lease 2 buses with option to buy but nothing has been done yet because the budget just passed.

V. Kenneth Beausoleil: Selectmen's Update

Thompson's Moody Bond Rating is A1. The Governor's budget is still volatile based on revenues coming in. Town is starting to pay some larger bills. The Building Maintenance account will be going over budget, they need \$6,622.00 to replace the waste oil furnace and \$1,800.00 to replace stove pipe for the outdoor wood burning stove. There have been 2 snow storms so far with minimal break downs. Town Hall had an Energy Audit done, the proposal is \$9K, Eversource approved it and is giving us a \$2K Conservation Incentive to put towards the cost and the Town's \$5K Bright Idea Grant, that has been accumulating over the past few years by saving energy which will expire on 12/31/17, will also be put towards it so the Town's cost to upgrade all lighting to energy efficient bulbs will be only \$2K. They are still searching for a Highway Director. The Fire Study is still gathering information, the report will be written in January. S. Witkowski asked for an email to BOF of their budget workshop schedule when set. R. Rooney asked about next year's State budget; CT is on a 2 year budget so no passing of state budget in 2018.

VI. Melinda Smith: Education Update

Enrollment is down to 1,003 students as usual this time of year. They are thankful the budget passed and are checking each line item, the Special Ed line item is close to being expended. Thompson Public Schools is designated an "Alliance District" which means they are mandated by the State Dept. of Ed to improve overall student performance in K-8 reading and math and has received \$400K in state funding for 17-18 school yr. to make these improvements happen. It's unknown how much they will receive in state funding for each year Thompson is designated an "Alliance District". She will get more info at the meeting on 1/8/18. Thompson Business Assoc. is starting a Weekend Warrior program on 1/5/18 for elementary students in need, on Fridays the student will take home a backpack full of food for their family and high school students will help get these backpacks on the bus. TMS afterschool boat program will be the featured youth program at the Hartford Boat Show from 2/8 – 2/11/18 and the students have received \$1,000.00 from Anderson Window to help get the students to the Boat Show and help them demonstrate their boat building skills. R. Mann stated the BOE voted to allow her to go into negotiations with a bus company they choose and asked if the report is the final draft of the schools numbers or is it still on going. M. Smith stated the Transportation Cost Analysis report is accurate to that moment in time and are pretty well vetted, Neal did a good job coming up with all the expenses he could think of and creating a very comprehensive analysis. A. McGarry asked what the process is on this privatization vote. M. Smith has been directed by BOE to enter into a contract with Dattco so she will finalize the details of their contract and create a transition plan first for the drivers then the routes and stops. B. Witkowski added they will still need to negotiate with the BOS regarding leasing of the Highway Garage bay and property and the disposition of the busses but the BOE is moving ahead with privatization. The 5-year contract starts FY18-19. Dattco offered to buy our busses for \$310K but the BOS will handle that. All field trips will continue to be paid for the same way. Overages will probably come out of BOE Budget but unknown at this time. Our Consultant has never seen a large % jump at the end of the 5yr contract, it's usually 2-3% increase. Dattco representative would like to finalize contract by end of January and start talking to drivers in February so FY18-19 budgets will be moving forward with a Dattco contract. S. Witkowski asked for an email to BOF of their budget workshop schedule when set.

Pat Dumas, Old Turnpike Rd, said there was an article in 7/28/17 Norwich Bulletin regarding the Town of Brooklyn and a \$30K increase to bus contract and did anyone know why. A personal opinion was Brooklyn didn't do the Pro-Forma Analysis correctly in the beginning. The Town of Thompson has been researching privatization for 9 years and their consultant Neal has done a great job with our Pro-Forma Analysis which is available for everyone on the schools website.

Roman Jamison, 56 Taylor Rd, concerns about what will happen in 5 years when the contract is over and we no longer own any busses. If needed it's always possible to start acquiring busses; there are 169 towns in the State of CT and only 5-6 towns still own their own bus fleet; from a legal and judiciary stand point Thompson has been advised by Town Attorneys for several years to do something about the busing; our #1 priority is the children's safety.

VII. Orla McKiernan-Rafferty: No Financial Report, Orla is on vacation.

Additional ECS Grant of \$750K received in November was expected.

VIII. Board of Trustees of the Tourtellotte Fund Update:

As of close of business last night there is \$3,071,332.00 in the Trust which includes the \$300K for the windows, which will be expended over the next 8 months, and \$100K that was approved in 17-18 Budget but not spent yet, leaving a balance of \$2,671,332.00 which is well above the base of \$2.4M they must maintain. The Annual Public Meeting is on February 5, 2018 at 6:00pm in the Library and encourages the BOF Members to attend; they will be amending their By-Laws and election of officers at this meeting. Prof. Patterson of Hartford Art School came for an overview of the Tourtellotte Museum and said we all are doing a great job for volunteers. Dr. Tourtellotte's brother John gave the museum a painting of General Tourtellotte.

IX. New Business: None

X. Old Business:

K. Beausoleil added to his report – there is a great article in the 12/15/17 edition of the Villager Newspaper, Chris Murphy and Senator Blumenthal are generating support, along with Joe Courtney, for the Blain Road Bridge Project.

XI. Board of Finance Members Comment:

S. Witkowski asked if any BOF Member has come forward to sit on the EDC Branding Committee, the BOF is the only one who doesn't have a representative. K. Beausoleil stated 2 years in a row Thompson has received an Economic Development Award for the Branding Project and we want to keep that enthusiasm going and having a rep from each Board/Commission on this Committee will help. The BOF will try to have a member at each meeting.

All Board Members approve the table set-up configuration.

XII. Adjourn

**Susanne Witkowski moved and Rob Mann seconded the motion to adjourn.
The motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Aaron McGarry adjourned the meeting at 8:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Minarik

Diane Minarik
Recording Secretary