



**TOWN of THOMPSON**  
**815 Riverside Drive**  
**North Grosvenordale, CT 06255**

**THOMPSON Board of Finance Regular Meeting**

**Thursday, November 19, 2020**

**via Zoom from remote locations**

**Minutes**

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1. Call to order by Chair Aaron McGarry was at 7:01 PM

Roll call: Members- Aaron McGarry (Chair), Jim Bellavance, Rob Mann, Rhonda Rooney, Robert Werge, Steve Herbert. Chair A. McGarry noted all Members are present.

Others: Orla McKiernan-Raftery (Finance Director), Melinda Smith (Superintendent of Schools), First Selectman Amy St Onge and Selectman Susanne Witkowski, Bob Gentes (Schools Finance Director), Board and Commission members, Members of the public, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

2. Review/approve minutes:

**Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Werge to approve the 10-15-2020 Regular Meeting minutes, noting a typographical error, carried unanimously.** Agenda item #X, page 3...~~doe~~ does the public...

4. Correspondence:

a. Invitation FAC November 18 meeting 7 pm with Mike Doherty, a representative from the Woodstock Fire Protection Association, at the Thompson Hill FD/ Cancellation notice.

b. Oct 22 Memo from Library Board

c. Thompson Schools Historic Medical Insurance Costs Data, 2017-present

5. Citizens' comments: none

6. Selectman's Update-First Selectman Amy St Onge "So much positive news!" \* Mill Redevelopment Project by John Gumpert—a proposal will go to PnZ next week. \* The Animal Control facility has benefitted from the hard work of several local individuals, for which she extends thanks. The project is moving forward. \* Dam Safety personnel from the DEEP contacted Centerville Bank, the owner of the North Grosvenordale dam, and they are working collaboratively to gain access over the Railroad line for the necessary work. \* The KofC hall was sold to an individual who owns a sports bar; the space will be converted to that use. \* A Special Town Meeting will be held next Tuesday, 11-24 utilizing the Schools auditorium for as many as 100 attendees in person, and all others may attend via Zoom. This hybrid meeting model allows all citizens to participate by using an on-line voting tool, coordinating with those in the room voting the traditional way by raising hands. Thanks were extended to the Schools staff in many departments including IT and Bill Burch and all who are involved. Comments/questions from the BOF: S. Herbert extended thanks to those who are making the Dog Pound viable. A. McGarry asked for clarification about how citizens utilizing Zoom would vote on the matters at the town meeting. He extended thanks to Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith for working so smoothly with the town.

7. School District Update-Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith: Offered thanks to Amy St Onge for the cooperation; the staff is enjoying working with the town and the town hall staff.



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\*The schools population remains constant at 958. At the beginning of the school year, 290 students utilized Distance Learning, interacting with their teachers from the student's home, which has now decreased to 200. \* Due to a student with a positive Covid test result, and then subsequently 2 more, only the elementary students are attending in person full time; the high school and middle school students are utilizing remote learning until the quarantine period clears. Contact tracing is now being utilized. \*Unbudgeted expenses associated with Covid are substantial; a grant for about \$350,000 came through which reimbursed the Schools for initial Covid protocol outlays, but since September other expenses have been incurred; FEMA is being consulted for more support. \* An Alliance District physical facility improvements grant (\$477,000) was received. Some estimates of the proposed upgrades were too low, but the important upgrade of the intercom/phone system and the dust collection in the shop area are covered. Other goals will have to wait. \* Review of the "Portrait of a Graduate" community involvement project: the resulting goals for the school district, which are being integrated into the curriculum. The identified qualities in a Thompson graduate: Independent, Knowledgeable, and Community-Connected. Marketing and public relations will begin. Comments/questions from the BOF: A. McGarry noted the importance of Financial Literacy as key component of the Knowledge aspect of the community forum. Discussion within the BOF indicated broad support for this aspect and others.

8. Financial Report- Finance Director Orla McKiernan-Raftery: the fiscal year report through October shows property taxes collection at \$9.4 M of \$9.65 M with collection 6% higher than at the same time last year. Grants received: State PILT (PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES) of \$7,960, the ECS quarterly amount of \$1.833 M and a Muni Stabilization grant of \$4,459. Local revenue from permits and fees: \$375 K (\$36 K higher than last year at this time). The FY 2019-2020 audit begins in 2 weeks, at the Town and at the Schools. The unofficial surplus for that FY is about \$250 K with the Town showing about \$55 K. The BOE had a PowerPoint presentation, the Historical Cost of Healthcare in the Schools, which was sent to the BOF members. It demonstrates the advantage of belonging to CT CHIP for health coverage.

9. Tourtellotte Fund update: O. McKiernan-Raftery noted that the windows project is beginning and that storm damage occurred at the Historical Society building. S. Herbert confirmed that there is facility insurance, and that only the deductible will be needed.

10. New Business:

a. Appropriation request for boundary survey at Langer Pond Dam not to exceed \$4,600: A. St Onge reviewed the town's liability regarding this dam (Wilsonville Road at Riverside Drive). J&D Engineering's boundary survey will identify the Town's precise obligations. R. Werge: does the DEEP seem to be moving toward removal? Yes, they are trending that way. A. McGarry- one building is an historic, stone structure which should be protected.

**Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Mann to appropriate not more than \$4,600 from Contingency for a boundary survey at Langer Pond carried unanimously, 6-0.**

S. Herbert-yes J. Bellavance – yes R. Werge-yes R. Mann- yes, R. Rooney – yes A. Mc Garry-yes



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b. FY20 year-end town budget transfers: After a thorough review of the document prepared by the Finance Director, A. McGarry question: is the Bulky Waste adjustment the result of additional home improvements being undertaken during the Covid period? The BOF agreed that more information is needed about Bulky Waste usage and fees and will ask for information about possibly raising these fees for next month's BOF meeting. **Motion A. McGarry to approve list of Transfers for FY 2020 as presented by the Finance Director on 11-19-2020.** Discussion led by S. Herbert ensued. After a more detailed examination line item #522260 for additional expenses related to Security as part of Town Hall Building expenses (#1801), which was seen as possibly falling into the current fiscal year, the \$3,449 was removed from the proposed fiscal year 2020 Budget Transfers, to be reexamined in the future. A. McGarry withdrew the motion; there had been no second.

**Motion A. McGarry seconded by S. Herbert to approve the Budget Transfer list for Fiscal 2020 as itemized by the Finance Director on 11-19-2020 in the amount of \$51,883 (reduced by \$3,449 from \$55,332) carried unanimously, 6-0.**

S. Herbert-yes J. Bellavance – yes R. Werge-yes R. Mann- yes, R. Rooney – yes A. McGarry-yes

11. Old Business: Safety Grant Project Update: O. McKiernan-Raftery will ask Bill Burch from the Schools to attend the meeting next month with an update; one had been presented to the BOE. A. St Onge noted that a meeting was held for review of the gate installation process.

12. Board of Finance Member Comments:

R. Werge asks if future BOF meetings will be conducted on Zoom. A. McGarry- with so much volatility regarding Covid-19, perhaps we should determine how to meet on a month-by-month basis, perhaps a week before the meeting. A. St Onge- live streaming from the town hall meeting room incorporating all the Zoom participants is possible with current technology.

R. Rooney- Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

A. McGarry- And everyone please stay safe.

13. Adjourn **Motion R. Rooney seconded by J. Bellavance to adjourn carried unanimously.** Chair A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

To hear the meeting in its entirety, click, or copy/paste to your search bar

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hVoDYaxt7Bs0BdckOBjMI\\_uTuvw4ukwKEm6wLoATuhLjMMtaC79TLRzABhiaRdew.uUajfOBNE5yTJ7](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hVoDYaxt7Bs0BdckOBjMI_uTuvw4ukwKEm6wLoATuhLjMMtaC79TLRzABhiaRdew.uUajfOBNE5yTJ7)  
Access Passcode: h9\$BXC LJ

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.*