



SELECTMEN'S MEETING

April 17, 2012

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, at 7:30 p.m. in the Merrill Seney Community Room.

PRESENT: Lawrence K. Groh, Jr., First Selectman; Kenneth Beausoleil, Selectman; Kerstin Forrester, Selectman; Jason Bleau – WINY Radio; Larry Wagner; Deborah Flanigan; Joseph Gaucher; Paul Baer; Kevin Walsh; James Sali; Paul R. Dery; Joanne Baker; Kevin Walsh; Paul Horanzy; Sally White; Steve Benoit; Al Landry; other concerned citizens

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to move Item 5, Public Hearing, to the beginning of this meeting.

Mr. Groh	-Yes
Mr. Beausoleil	-Yes
Mrs. Forrester	-Yes

PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY 2012 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDS

Mr. Wagner presented information on the Community Development Block Grant program and the history of this program in Thompson. A municipality may submit one grant proposal by June 8, 2012. This is a multi-year project for upgrading systems at the Thompson Housing Authority, specifically Gladys Green Apartments and Pine View Court. There are seventy units which will have handicapped accessibility features, some interior upgrades for kitchens and bathrooms, and the alarm system will meet current code standards for first responders.

Ms. Flanigan, the Thompson Housing Authority Director, noted that this current phase will address these safety issues. An architectural firm has consulted with the Thompson Housing Authority to determine needs and a multi-year plan.

There was a discussion of the project. All work will be determined by sealed bids. Mr. Sali and Ms. Baker of the Thompson Housing Authority were in favor of this project. Different grant programs will be explored. Ms. Baker stated that some of the renovations will be paid for by the Thompson Housing Authority.

Mr. Groh thanked Mr. Wagner and Ms. Flanigan for this presentation. He will ask Town Planner Kevin Kennedy to prepare a resolution for the next Selectmen's Meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to close the Public Hearing.

Mr. Groh	-Yes
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<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Meetings of April 3, 2012 and March 20, 2012.

<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health announcing that the East Thompson Fire Department has met standards for First Responders. Mr. Groh presented the monthly report from Troop D. Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Public Defender's Office forwarding \$1,000.00 restitution for the window vandalism last year at the Thompson Public Library/Community Center. This will cover the Town's insurance deductible.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Groh thanked Thompson Together, Norma O'Leary and all citizens who participate in the April Roadside Clean-up. The French River Clean-up was held last Saturday, as well as the Thompson Little League Parade.

Mr. Groh also reported another incident of vandalism at the Thompson Public Library /Community Center that occurred late last Friday/early Saturday. There was substantial damage to the interior of the Library complex and insurance estimate are pending. The newly installed security cameras were in operation and the State Police are utilizing this information in their investigation.

Mr. Beausoleil stated that the Thompson Little League Opening Day was blessed with good weather. This organization, with over two hundred participants, utilizes the four fields at the complex and the ball field in Riverside Park.

Mr. Beausoleil read into the record the recipients of the VFW Ladies Auxilliary Unpaid Professional Awards from last night's ceremony. The Fire Departments were recognized for their service, Shirley Houle was named Citizen of the Year, Darlene Tretheway of the Thompson Recreation Department was named Youth Volunteer, Tyler Boiden received recognition as the Most Valuable Team Player, and Beverly Blanchard was honored for One Thousand Volunteer Hours at Day Kimball Hospital. Mr. Beausoleil offered his thanks and congratulations to these citizens who make Thompson a special place to live due to their contributions to our community. Mr. Groh noted that he attended the Charter Communications Advisory Board meeting last night with Thompson's representative Dick Trudeau. There was a discussion of senior discounts, billing procedures and other issues. If any citizen wishes to become a representative, please contact Mr. Groh.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Dery asked for clarification on the purpose of tonight's Public Hearing. Mr. Groh replied that public input and general comments on the CDBG Program was sought. There will be a Resolution presented at a future Board of Selectmen Meeting.

Mr. Gaucher expressed concern regarding the litter and trash near Market Street and Cumberland Farms. Mr. Groh has informed Thompson Together of the need to clean this area.

Miss White asked if the incidences of vandalism at the Library Complex have resulted in an increased insurance premium. Mr. Groh replied that it has not increased at this time.

Miss White noted a recent advertisement regarding an auction of town-owned equipment in Woodstock and asked if Thompson has held such an auction. Mr. Groh replied that we have done so periodically.

Miss White expressed concern regarding recent news stories of the proposed Visitor's Center in Wilsonville. Mr. Groh gave a brief history of the Visitor's Center. The recent news story is the result of The Last Green Valley organization's inquiry to NECCOG regarding being a tenant of such a Center. Mr. Groh stated that all options will be weighed before entering into a decision.

Mr. Gaucher noted that there is a new Visitor Center in New London.

Mr. Sali asked for an update of the Budget process. Mr. Groh stated that the Board of Finance met last Thursday, April 12, 2012 and finalized their deliberations; they will recommend a 1.191 mill increase at the Annual Town Meeting, scheduled for Monday, May 21, 2012, 8 p.m. at the TMHS Auditorium. The date of the referendum will be designated by the Registrars.

Miss White expressed concern for the ability of the citizens to pay for an increase as many people are unemployed or are living on a fixed income.

Mrs. Forrester noted that there has been an increase in overall population during which time the school population has decreased.

Mr. Groh noted that although the center of the town has a higher unemployment rate, Thompson as a whole is at the average unemployment rate. He also stated that all citizens will have a voice during the referendum.

Mr. Walsh stated that, at the Joint Meeting of the Boards of Selectmen, Education and Finance, he questioned if the Boards have a pulse of the overall financial conditions of the citizenry.

Mr. Groh commented that he was glad to see approximately four hundred citizens in attendance at the Budget Presentation and seventeen at the Joint Meeting of the Boards. He observed that the Board of Finance used comments/opinions expressed that night in making their decisions on the Budget.

Mr. Baer expressed concern regarding the location of the meeting, the publicity by the Parent Teacher Organizations, and the behavior of many of the attendees. Mrs. Baker agreed with these comments and felt that the publicity was inappropriate.

Mr. Groh stated that Town Meetings have been held in the Middle School Gymnasium in the past and that seating capacity is a concern when planning a meeting.

Mr. Walsh suggested that guidelines be developed for future meetings. He also expressed concern regarding intimidating behavior by some audience members.

Mrs. Forrester spoke as a citizen of her concern with getting people out to vote. She asked for input and stated the methods used at the present time – WINY Radio, Village Newspapers, etc. There was a brief discussion of the impetus of citizens to participate.

Mr. Benoit commented that past history has led many citizens to believe their vote isn't significant and some become discouraged.

Mrs. Forrester asked all citizens to encourage their neighbors to vote.
Mr. Groh encouraged everyone to exercise the right to vote.
Miss White stated her concerns regarding the Public School's telephone and flyer usage. Mr. Groh suggested that she bring these concerns to the Board of Education meeting.
Mr. Beausoleil suggested that citizens bring their concerns about the Budget Presentation Meeting to the Board of Finance. Mr. Groh noted that the Board of Finance meets this Thursday.

STEAP FUNDS FOR WEST THOMPSON FIRE DEPARTMENT ROOF REPLACEMENT - \$150,000.00

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to bring to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting the acceptance of STEAP Funds of \$150,000.00 for the West Thompson Fire Department Roof Replacement.

<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CL&P EFFICIENCY INCENTIVE PROGRAM FUNDS FOR THOMPSON SOCIAL SERVICE FACILITY - \$13,934.00

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to bring to the Board of Finance and then the Town Meeting the acceptance of CL&P Efficiency Incentive Program Funds for the Thompson Social Service Facility of \$13,934.00

<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

ENERGY EFFICIENCY COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR THOMPSON SOCIAL SERVICE FACILITY - \$9,930.00

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to bring to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant Funds for the Thompson Social Service Facility of \$9,930.00.

<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CT OFFICE OF POLICY & MANAGEMENT FUNDS FOR THOMPSON SOCIAL SERVICE FACILITY - \$65,000.00

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to bring the CT Office of Policy & Management Funds for Thompson Social Service Facility to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting.

Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

Mrs. Forrester -Yes

Mr. Groh -Yes

Discussion on Motion: These funds will complete the project.

***CT OFFICE OF POLICY & MANAGEMENT FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND
AT RIVER MILL VILLAGE - \$20,000.00***

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to bring to the Board of Finance and then to Town Meeting the acceptance of CT Office of Policy and Management Funds for Community Playground at River Mill Village of \$20,000.00

Mrs. Forrester -Yes

Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

Mr. Groh -Yes

Discussion on Motion:

There was a discussion of the history of this project, both in the past decades and in the recent discussions with Winn Management and the parents of the children in the River Mill Village children. There was further discussion of the recent vandalism acts and the coverage by Troop D. Mr. Groh encouraged citizens to contact Thompson Together regarding the Neighborhood Watch meetings.

APPROVAL OF NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING DATE & AGENDA

Mr. Beausoleil read into the record the Notice of Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 7, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Merrill Seney Community Room.

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to approve the Notice of Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

Mrs. Forrester -Yes

Mr. Groh -Yes

Discussion on Motion: Mr. Dery asked for clarification on the Notice. Mr. Groh provided the information that items 7, 8 and 9 on this evening's agenda are listed on the Notice under Item 3.

***REQUEST FOR USE OF TRANSFER STATION – VFW POST 10088 AND LADIES
AUXILLIARY***

Mr. Groh has received a request from VFW Commander Elmer Preston and the Ladies Auxilliary to use Town property and the Transfer Station to distribute poppies.

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to allow the VFW and Ladies Auxillary to use town owned property and the Transfer Station on May 23, May 24, May 24, and May 25, 2012, for poppy distribution, under the specific direction of Elmer Preston.

<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

EXECUTIVE SESSION – POSSIBLE LAND TRANSFER

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to enter into Executive Session at 9:12 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a possible land transfer.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

The Board returned to the Merrill Seney Community Room at 10:16 p.m., with no action taken.

TAX REFUNDS

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to refund the following overpayment as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.

Michelle Baril	\$5.77
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

OTHER BUSINESS

Miss White asked for further clarification for the proposed playground in River Mill Village. Mr. Groh stated that volunteers from the River Mill Village and Winn Development will oversee the maintenance. The playground will be overseen by the Recreation Commission, as with other parks in Thompson.

Miss White expressed concern that this property will be purchased from Mrs. LaPalme, who is the mother of the Recreation Director.

Mr. Groh stated that this project has been publically reviewed by the Recreation Commission, Thompson Together, the Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as the Board of Selectmen.

The recorder reached memory capacity at 10:22 p.m. Further comments are as transcribed from written notes.

Mr. Walsh asked for clarification on the sale of town owned lands. Mr. Groh stated that town owned property must be voted on at Town Meeting before sale or disposal, per ordinance, and then go out for sealed bid. The best interest of the Town is always sought. Mr. Landry noted the value of Open Space lands regarding the tax base.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:30 p.m.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Forrester</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Recorded and transcribed by:
Lynn Landry