



SELECTMEN'S MEETING November 19, 2013

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2013, at 6:59 p.m. at the Town Hall – Merrill Seney Room.

PRESENT: Paul Lenky, First Selectman; Kerstin Forrester, Selectman; Shaina Smith, Selectman; Joseph H. Gaucher, Linda Jarmolowicz, Roger Tremblay, John Rice, James Niedzialkoski, Mike Blackmer, Frances Becker, Susanne Witkowski, Larry Groh Jr., Tom Poplawski, Kevin Walsh, Kathleen Herbert, Sally White, Paul Baer, Steve Benoit, Donald Brown, WINY Reporter and other concerned citizens.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting of November 6, 2013, as presented.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Special Meeting of November 12, 2013, with one correction.

Correction: Appointment to Board of Education, page 2, "Mrs. Forrester stated that she feels the Board of Selectmen should **not** be voting on this and that she questions the timeline that was followed in filing Mr. Akana's resignation.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Motion made by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Special Meeting of November 14, 2013, as presented.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

2) CORRESPONDENCE:

1) Letter from Allan Walker, NECCOG Chair, dated October 31, 2013, to W. David LeVasseur, State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management, cc NECCOG Member Towns, regarding the issue of regional boundaries as required by Section 249 of Public Act 13-247.

2) Monthly Calls for Service Report from Connecticut State Police, Troop D Barracks dated November 2, 2013.

3) Letter from the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission, dated November 18, 2013, regarding Notice of Meeting, Docket #FIC 2013-205, filed by Paul Baer against John Bell, former Chairman of the Fire Advisory Committee and the Town of Thompson, to be held on December 18, 2013.

4) Letter from Senator Donald E. Williams, dated October 24, 2013, to Dan Forrest, Director, Arts and Historic Preservation, cc Larry Groh Jr., regarding the preservation of the William H. Mason house.

5) Letter from the DEEP, dated November 6, 2013, to Joan and Nicholas Swearer, regarding Thompson International Speedway, LLC.

3) SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS:

- 1) Mr. Lenky stated that it is a new year and he wanted to thank the former BOS for doing a great job. He further stated that he wants to work closely with the new Board to get information out to the citizens of the town.
- 2) Mrs. Forrester stated the same.
- 3) Mrs. Smith thanked everyone for their votes.

4) CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

- Donald Brown stated that he had heard that the Recreation Commission was going to stop the Adventure Camp from using the Quaddick State Park for their summer program. Mr. Lenky stated that he would be happy to look into this and he further stated that he hoped that the town will keep the camp running.
- Sally White stated that the town of Mansfield televises their Town Council meetings on channel 13 and they also live stream the meetings on the town's website and she asked the Board to look into the feasibility of having the BOS meetings taped and put on the website. She further stated that there seemed to be a lot more participation from the townspeople. Also, Ms. White stated that she has been hearing for a few months that there is a perceived problem at the state park with the Recreation Commission and Koinonia School of Sports and the Adventure Camp. She stated that she called Quaddick and was referred to Lori Lindquist at Mashmucket who referred her to Doug Gains in Hartford who runs "Special Use" for the DEEP. She stated that they intend on having a major discussion this winter about the situation and the bottom line is that what is going on is beyond the scope of acceptable use of the state park. Since there is no formal arrangement with the Recreation Commission there are now buses that come in almost daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and there are no requirements for them to obtain special use permits. Mr. Lenky commented, so what they are saying is that they don't want the town to use the park on an everyday basis in the summer time and from what Ms. White is saying they don't have the permission to use the park every day. Ms. White stated that they would hope that the town would find another way to run their summer camp. Mr. Lenky further stated that they have to sit down with the Recreation Commission and work it out and also get more information from the state. Lastly, Ms. White stated that the school is trying to implement a new vocational program that has to do with broadcasting and maybe they can use them for taping the Board meetings. Mrs. Smith commented that Killingly also records their town meetings and they have run into issues finding the manpower and the equipment is expensive and is a huge investment. Ms. White stated that she would not suggest that the town purchase the equipment but maybe the school can look into a grant to purchase this equipment.
- Frances Becker stated that when she first moved to Azud Road the area was just woods and now there are many houses. She further stated that they had an agreement with the town that the road would be kept up and now there are many pot holes and the road is in need of being repaved. Also, there are many signs that have gone missing especially at the four corners. Mr. Lenky stated that he will talk to Leo Adams and they will go out and check the area and then, if applicable, could be discussed in the upcoming budget. He thanked her for her concern.
- Paul Baer welcomed the new Board members. He mentioned that he gave a report on the website statistics to Mr. Lenky. He also stated that ironically he received an email from the town hall about what Ms. White brought up about broadcasting the meeting and this has to do with generating meeting minutes and live streaming the meetings themselves. He will follow up on this. Also, regarding the CCM Prescription Drug Card Program that it is now complete, he stated that he knows of one senior who used the card at Walmart and saved \$2.00 off of one prescription. He further commented that the savings that were lost on delaying this program, over the year that it took to implement the program, could have been substantial for the participants. He also stated that approximately 800 people have downloaded the flyer from the website. Mr. Baer also commented that TEEG put out a brochure which is their annual report. He stated that the report indicates an income of over \$1,228,908.00 and expenses to programs of \$1,016,976.00 leaving \$11,932.00 as retained earnings; he questioned how they have been paying their staff and any overhead as the report only indicates expenses to programs. He further stated that he is very impressed if this is accurate. He suggested that before the town gives out any more money that the town needs to require an audited financial statement. Further, he stated that the Fire Advisory Committee

has been in place for 3 years now and he wanted to know if the Emergency Medical Services Plan has been signed and in place. Mr. Baer also observed that the Board gave authorization to the First Selectmen to sign the plan. Mrs. Forrester stated that she has some amendments still to add to the plan. Mr. Baer asked about the hiring of a fire consultant to review fire protection procedures in town and he reminded the Board that that is the number one charge for the Fire Advisory Committee and in 3 years they have not done so and he also mentioned the fatal fire which occurred in February of 2013 and he stated that this could have been prevented if they had hired a consultant to review the department's procedures. He said that the town needs to come up with the money to hire a fire consultant to review all 5 fire departments. Also, he further stated that if the town cannot come up with the money that he would look into other avenues to have an investigation done. He also stated that a Post Incident Analysis Report is generally done on serious fires with fatalities. He further stated that the fire department involved has refused to do this. Mrs. Forrester commented that they have a report and have been working on it for the past 2 months and it is has been hard to go back since she wasn't involved with it when it started and that this should be complete by the December BOS meetings. She also stated that the West Thompson Fire Department has been very cooperative in releasing information. Mr. Baer suggested that this item be added to the BOS meeting agenda. Mr. Baer also commented that the former chief from the west Thompson Fire Department had stepped down and the new chief is now out on sick leave and now the former chief is back as acting chief. He commented that the last Fire Advisory Committee agenda had "Finalize Post Incident Analysis Report on February 2013 Fatal Fire of Gladys Green" listed. He stated that this needs to be resolved soon and Mrs. Forrester stated that it will be. Mr. Lenky commented that it was his understanding that if there is fatal fire that the State Fire Marshall comes in to investigate the fire. Mrs. Forrester stated that she did ask the State Fire Marshall for a report and she was told to contact the Connecticut State Police, Troop D, which she did and they did not have a report either. Mr. Lenky also stated that he has heard a lot of stories but doesn't know what really happened. Mr. Baer stated that he can provide a call report from QVEC which is the emergency dispatch center. The Board members stated that they have not seen the report but would like to see a copy. Mrs. Smith asked about the hiring of a fire consultant and Mrs. Forrester stated that it was brought before either the BOS or the BOF before she was on the Committee and it was rejected. Mr. Baer stated that this was brought up in a BOS meeting in August and the Board voted to get a quote for no more than \$9,500.00. Mrs. Forrester stated that Mr. Baer may think that it is dragging on but she has only been in charge of the Fire Advisory Committee for several months. Since that time they have completed the EMS Plan and have been working on the Post Incident Analysis Report and they have been gathering information to be ready for the hiring of a fire consultant. He stated that the Post Incident Analysis Report should have been done right after the fire. Mrs. Forrester agreed with him but she stated that she wasn't there and wasn't in charge. Mr. Baer lastly commented on the hiring of an additional tax clerk. He stated that the new Board should be coming in and looking at what is needed in each town department versus hiring another full time employee especially after increasing hours for the other tax clerk. He stated that it is fiscally irresponsible to come in on the first night of their new administration and hire a new employee that is going to give the town legacy costs for years. Mrs. Forrester explained that Mr. Groh called 2 BOS Special Meetings on both August 22, 2013, and August 29, 2013, to discuss what was needed for personnel with Tax Collector, Rene Morin, on what was needed for hours in the tax office. Mrs. Forrester had voted no to his requests and was out voted. They had another meeting to look at resumes and the position was also posted and they hired the new tax clerk last week. The Board stated that this employee will be used in other departments as a floater. A citizen asked about the new hires hours and it was stated 30 hours.

- John Rice commented on the investigation of the fatal fire and was wondering why the town was not further pursuing the State Fire Marshall and the CT State Police on getting a Post Incident Analysis Report instead of going after the local fire department when they are volunteers and not paid for their services. Mr. Baer has spoken to the local Fire Marshall and he stated that since they are directly involved with the incident they are the best people capable of doing the Post Incident Analysis Report. Steven Benoit commented that when hiring a fire consultant that they need to remember that they are looking at 5 fire departments which will be more costly to the town.

- Kevin Walsh congratulated the new Board. He also thanked Mr. Lenky for starting off the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. In regards to the new hire in the tax office at 30 hours and possibly using the new hire as a floater; this was thrown out by the last Board and it was frowned upon by the unions. The unions might have something to say when this takes place and maybe they can provide some feedback on this. He also asked about the TEEG payroll and does anyone have any figures on this. The Board did not know the answer to this, and he stated that they are pushing about ½ million dollars in payroll per year.

●Another issue mentioned by a concerned citizen was regarding 122 Azud Road and that there is a blight in front of the house not relating to construction. The blight is from the edge of the road to the back of the house and isn't there a blight log in the town. Also this person has lived in town for many years but has not registered a vehicle. Mr. Lenky stated that he will have Leo Adams look at the problem and they will have to look into a blight ordinance. He did say that there is an ordinance which states that you can have only 2 unregistered vehicles on your property. He further commented that they saw a lot of vehicles not registered in town or even in the state while out campaigning. He further stated there if there is a health hazard that it should be cleaned up and he will have to look into a blight ordinance.

●Sally White stated that while at the last BOF meeting they had stated that they did not want to hire anyone in the tax office. And would the Board take that into consideration. Mrs. Forrester stated that the BOF was recommending hiring 2 non-union 19 hour position with no benefits. She further stated that because of the Union Regulations they cannot put a non-union person in a union position.

●Paul Baer stated that the paving crew on Wilsonville Road had left hazardous conditions exposed to anyone traveling the road. There was an unprotected culvert abutment left for days and since then they have remedied this by putting in a curbing. There was no flagging or traffic cones in place to warn oncoming traffic. He stated that there were 4 or 5 hazards left in the area of 395.

●Kathleen Herbert commented on the Wilsonville Road paving project. She stated that going around the S curve there were 3 trucks parked and there was no warning flagging in place and that they were blocking half the S curve. Also there are 2 brutal rocks sticking out on the S curve and they need to get rid of those rocks since people can get flat tires. Also, what were they thinking when they did the patchwork since it does not seem necessary and worse than it was. Mr. Lenky stated that he will contact Leo Adams on this. She also stated that there had been a Special Meeting for signs on that S curve. Mr. Adams had stated that they were going to put up signs when they were finished with the repaving. She stated that the road is paved and there are still no signs up. Mr. Lenky will address this with Mr. Adams.

●Kathleen Herbert also mentioned the broken guard rails at the playground.

5) APPROVAL OF NEW HIRE – FINANCIAL TAX CLERK – SCOTT ANTONSON:

Motion made by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to approve new hire, Scott Antonson, to the position of Financial Tax Clerk, with an effective start date of Monday, November 25, 2013.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

6) APPOINTMENTS FOR SPECIAL FIRE POLICE:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to appoint West Thompson Special Fire Police - Celeste Fifield and Victor Doucette; East Thompson Special Fire Police – Francis Duquette; Community Special Fire Police – Donald Deslauries, Wendy Pieper, John Rice, Allen Gauthier, Mary Preston, John Lafontaine, Frank Heath, John Ducharme and Frederick E. Cote; Quinebaug Special Fire Police – Joseph Donovan Jr., John Note and Bernard Gaboury.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

7) APPOINTMENTS FOR FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Motion made by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to reappoint Bill Poirier and to appoint Larry Guillote to the Fire Advisory Committee.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

8) APPOINTMENT FOR TREASURER – MICHAEL T. MARTIN:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to appoint Michael T. Martin as Treasurer. Mrs. Smith asked about the length of term and Mr. Lenky stated it is a 2 year term.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

9) PROCLAMATION FOR EAGLE SCOUT – SAMUEL HENRY WALLACE FONTAINE:

Mr. Lenky read the proclamation for the record.

Motion was made by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to approve the proclamation. Mrs. Smith also thanked Mr. Fontaine for his commitment.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

10) REQUEST TO USE TRANSFER STATION – COMMUNITY FIRE COMPANY, INC.:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to approve the request of the Community Fire Company to use the transfer station from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for a Boot Drive on November 30, 2013.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

11) TAX REFUNDS:

Motion made by Mr. Lenky, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to refund the following overpayment as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester –Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Vincent J. Zeto \$37.93

12) OTHER BUSINESS:

No other business.

13) ADJOURN:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:09 p.m.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester –Yes
Mrs. Smith - Yes

Recorded and Transcribed by Patricia Lacasse.