



TOWN of THOMPSON

Board of Selectmen

**Minutes: Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2015
Thompson Library/Community Center**

p. 1 of 7

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

First Selectman Paul Lenky called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Present: Kerstin Forrester
Paul Lenky
Shaina Smith

Staff Present: Tina Fox, Recording Secretary

Also Present: Members of the Public

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 1, 2015 special meeting with the following correction:**
 1. Page 2: 'requesting' rather than 'requeting.'

Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.
- b. **Shaina Smith moved and Kerstin Forrester seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 7, 2015 meeting with the following corrections:**
 1. Page 2: 'Stratos' rather than 'Strattos,' which occurred multiple times.
 2. Page 3: section b, the 'comment from a Board of Finance meeting', was from a Board of Selectmen budget meeting, and not an open session.
 3. Page 3: section k, 'the Town Attorney' rather than 'an attorney.'
 4. Page 4: section c, 'fuel tanks' rather than 'fuel prices.'
 5. page 6: section d,4: 'uphold' rather than 'hold to.' Also occurs on page 7, very first line.

Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.
- c. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 15, 2015 special meeting as written.**

Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.
- d. **Shaina Smith moved and Kerstin Forrester seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 15, 2015 special meeting as written.**

Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

- e. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 17, 2015 special meeting as written.**

Kerstin Forrester- Yes

Paul Lenky- Yes

Shaina Smith- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

2. Correspondence

- a. P. Lenky presented the following correspondence:
1. Thompson Community Day is Sunday, September 27th, at Riverside Park.
 2. Charter Communications Board will meet Monday, April 26 at Eastern Connecticut University.
 3. Thompson Little League parade on Saturday, April 25th, gathering at 10:45 am at the library, with the parade starting at 11:00 am.
 4. On April 27th, the TWPCA will be performing work on the sewer system between 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm.
 5. A letter from Don Pimental to the Selectman's Office requesting the Board contact Danielson police regarding the missing documents.
 6. A letter from Don Pimental to the Selectman's Office requesting the Board validate to the residents of Thompson who was responsible for creating the road list document.
 7. A letter from Francisco T. Fadul asking that the Town provide information on bridges less than 20ft in length so that they can be inspected.
 8. An email from a resident regarding the way people are selected for employment as camp counselors.
 9. Interstate Reliability Project will be performing maintenance around Quaddick Town Farm Road.
 10. Two letters from Claire Berube regarding the vaults and combinations in the Assessor's Office.
 11. Letter from J&D Engineering regarding the use variance request from Zoning Board of Appeals for the solar farm.
- b. K. Forrester presented the following correspondence:
1. Questionnaire to be filled out regarding the website. The Town Clerk is collecting the questionnaires.
 2. Document from CCM regarding House Bill 6970 that would result in significant increases in costs to small communities.

3. Selectmen's Comments

- a. K. Forrester stated that she has been attempting to find out who made the road list that resident Don Pimental has been asking about. She stressed that the Town is working to find out where the July 29, 2014 document came from, and where the change came from.
- b. S. Smith asked if the Board would be discussing the salary and benefits for the Town Clerk. The Board would discuss the issue later on the agenda, under 'Budget Changes.'
- c. S. Smith asked K. Forrester if she is still working on a chart for the proposals for the fuel tank replacement. K. Forrester replied that she is still working on the chart, but she hopes to have it completed by the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

- d. S. Smith asked K. Forrester if she found the information regarding how many meetings the Board of Assessment Appeals had the previous year, which was brought up when the Board discussed appointing a recording secretary for that Board. K. Forrester responded that the Board had 12 meetings the previous year, and she planned to give that information to the Board of Finance.
 - e. S. Smith mentioned a Selectmen's Comment from K. Forrester at the previous meeting regarding a WINY Facebook post/a comment made on that post.
 - f. S. Smith asked about speaking to the Building Office in regards to the office being open on Fridays. She stated that on Friday afternoon, she noticed the Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) was acting as Building Official because a citizen had a question and he (the ZEO) stated that he was certified. She asked when the office would begin being open on Fridays. P. Lenky answered that it would occur the first week of May.
 - g. S. Smith asked if the Board had heard from John Filchak. P. Lenky answered that he spoke to him today and John Filchak stated that he would send the information to the Board.
 - h. S. Smith asked about road updates, specifically if there was a list of what the Highway Department wants to pave before July 1st. P. Lenky responded that the Board of Finance would be provided that information at their next meeting.
 - i. S. Smith asked where the website questionnaire would be available. P. Lenky stated that it would be available at Town Hall and on the website. S. Smith agreed that it would be a good idea to have the questionnaire available on the home page of the website.
 - j. P. Lenky clarified some information regarding the pay for the current ZEO. He stated that the total savings for the year for the ZEO is \$9,203.
 - k. P. Lenky also stated that someone was temporarily taking minutes for the Board of Assessment Appeals meetings to eliminate Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) complaints. He stated that he was of the opinion that someone at the meeting on the Board cannot take minutes at the same time. He did not believe it was wasteful spending, especially because nothing has been added to the budget for the payment of that person.
4. Citizen's Comments (Limit 3 minutes)
- a. Kevin Walsh, Blain Rd., asked if the next item on the agenda (Stratos Studio-Jim Stratos) was going to take pace. K. Forrester responded that it would not.
 - b. Paul Baer, Thompson, stated that there are still some issues with the website. He mentioned that there is still no section for the Ethics Committee, and he stressed that they are currently meeting twice a month and anyone interested should attend. He mentioned that Economic Development Commission currently spends 50% of its budget on a recoding secretary and that the minutes are very light. He stated that other committees do their own minutes and that Board of Assessment Appeals minutes are very simple. He further stated that as far as FOIA complaints, when minutes are not filed for two years, it's a problem. He mentioned that a few months back he thought it would be a good idea to add sprinkler piping to Gladys Green and Pineview. He stated that there is a bill in the legislature to mandate sprinkler systems in single family homes and care facilities. He stated that Connecticut has a coalition for sprinklers in single family homes and a little foresight would be good before another tragedy happens.

- c. Kathy Thomas, a member of the Recreation Commission, addressed the email from a concerned parent that P. Lenky brought up in his correspondence. She stated that the Commission never promises employment for a volunteer, and that the Commission does not hire counselors, but rather they make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. She stated that the Commission had to cancel their next meeting because the Board of Selectmen did not reappoint Recreation Commission members. P. Lenky stated that the members were reappointed. K. Thomas further stated that what is being neglected in the mathematics in regards to the ZEO pay is that he is working 250 hours less.
 - d. Tom Angelo stated that although he is a Board of Education member, he is at the meeting as a Thompson resident and taxpayer. He stated that it's a shame that Thompson has come to the point that there are warring factions. The FOIA complaints are causing the Town significant amounts in attorney fees. He stated that the complaints should be handled internally rather than being taken to Hartford every time.
 - e. Paul Baer, Thompson, stated that there is mediation available for the FOIA complaints, but that people choose to involve attorneys instead of accepting mediation.
 - f. Don Pimental, 40 Starr Rd., asked if the purpose of the Town buying open space is to mine gravel off of that land or to preserve it. P. Lenky stated that it is not in the best interest of the Town to mine gravel off of purchased open space land.
5. Stratos Studio- Jim Stratos
- a. P. Lenky stated that this agenda item would not go forward because Jim Stratos was not in attendance, but that the website questionnaire was available.
6. Ordinance for Economic Development Commission
- a. P. Lenky read an ordinance aloud.
 - b. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to accept the recommendation for the ordinance to amend and decrease Economic Development Commission membership from 7 to 5.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - c. P. Lenky clarified that this ordinance would be a benefit to the Town because the Commission currently has trouble filling the empty Commission spots.
7. Budget Changes
- a. K. Forrester presented the spreadsheet she put together that looks at giving nonunion employees the same increase that is in the union contract. She stated that the increase is less than what the Board originally put in the budget, so the increase would actually decrease the current budget proposal.
 - b. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to approve the 2.25% increase for nonunion employees for the 2015 proposed budget.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.

- c. K. Forrester brought up nonunion employee contribution to the healthcare premium. She stated that the union increase is 1.5 points. She mentioned that most of the employee contracts do state that the healthcare premium contributions will follow union discussions. The impact would be a small decrease to the proposed budget.
 - d. **P. Lenky moved and S. Smith seconded the motion to increase the employee's share of healthcare premiums by 1.5 percentage points.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - e. The Board discussed the Town Clerk and Assessor's salary. K. Forrester's recommendation was to reduce the Assessor's salary to \$49,000. K. Forrester stated that the current Town Clerk is proposing to cut his hours and salary, which would reduce the budget by about \$25,000. S. Smith asked if it was determined if he (the current Town Clerk) is still eligible to work for the Town as an elected official. K. Forrester stated that she spoke to someone (Ted Bromlin) at the State and received the following information: the question has been raised to the State several times, it's never been challenged, and the cost of legal fees to remove him would far exceed any savings. S. Smith asked about the mileage reimbursement the Town Clerk requested. K. Forrester replied that there would be no mileage reimbursement, and the Town Clerk admitted he should not have asked for that.
 - f. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to submit the numbers for the Town Clerk and Assessor's position to the Board of Finance.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - g. S. Smith specified that she would feel more comfortable making a decision like this and participating in the conversation if she had been able to see the figures/numbers a little bit earlier. She stressed that she does appreciate the numbers that K. Forrester came up with.
8. Resignation of Ernest Bryant
- a. K. Forrester stated that because the situation involves medical issues, all the Board will say is that he cannot work any longer. S. Smith asked about a resignation letter. K. Forrester stated that there was not a resignation letter, but that the Town Attorney stated that the Board did not need one.
 - b. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to accept the resignation of Ernest Bryant.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - c. **Shaina Smith moved and Paul Lenky seconded the motion to add 'Cleaning Services' to the agenda under 'Other Business.'**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
9. Appointments- Agriculture Commission: Earl Norman, Art Siegmund
- a. **Kerstin Forrester moved and Shaina Smith seconded the motion to appoint Earl Norman and Art Siegmund to the Agriculture Commission.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - b. K. Forrester asked when the term ends, to which P. Lenky responded that it was August 1, 2019.

- c. S. Smith asked how often that Commission meets. P. Lenky responded that he was not sure.
10. Road Updates
- a. P. Lenky stated that the road crews are still doing patching, and have commenced road sweeping. He stated that he will have figures for the Board of Finance at their next meeting.
 - b. S. Smith asked if the Highway Department knows about the discussions the Board had in regards to setting priorities during budget sessions. P. Lenky responded that he would be talking to Leo Adams.
 - c. K. Forrester mentioned having Leo Adams put together a weekly plan ahead of times so that the Highway Department knows what they are doing and the Board can know what to expect.
11. Other Business
- a. Cleaning Services
 - 1. S. Smith mentioned that there is currently a cleaning service coming in to Town Hall and that the Board decided to factor into the budget the probability of needing to hire a company for cleaning services.
 - 2. **Shaina Smith moved and Kerstin Forrester seconded the motion to go out to bid for a cleaning service for Town Hall.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
 - b. K. Forrester mentioned that a few meetings ago, the Selectmen agreed to take turns attending the Economic Development Commission meetings. She stated that if the schedule is okay, she would like to put the dates in their calendars.
12. Citizen's Comments on Agenda (Limit 3 minutes)
- a. Joe Gaucher, 519 Riverside Dr., stated that Eversource is not cleaning the debris from the roads when they chip branches.
 - b. Kevin Walsh, Blain Rd., in regards to FOIA complaints, stated that he is in agreement that the complaints are a huge waste of money and shouldn't take place. He believed the way to remedy the situation is for people in positions of authority and responsibility to comply with the FOIA. He mentioned that Paul Baer is willing to work with people when there are complaints, and it hasn't worked. He stated that if people follow the guidelines, 95% of the potential problems would be eliminated.
 - c. Kathy Thomas had a concern with having a cleaning service clean Town Hall because there are evening meetings at Town Hall and not every Commission/Board/Committee has someone with a key to Town Hall. P. Lenky stated that he often goes to Town Hall to lock up after meetings.
 - d. Wayne O'Brien, 108 Fabyan Rd., asked if the next Town Clerk has to be trained by the current Town Clerk, to which K. Forrester replied that the current Town Clerk will not be training the next Town Clerk.
 - e. Kevin Walsh, Blain Rd., stated that he does not believe people are violating the FOIA intentionally, but if a mistake is made once, pointed out, and then occurs over and over again, there is a genuine concern that people aren't taking the FOIA seriously.

- f. Paul Baer, Thompson, asked if the raises for nonunion employees included employees at the library and employees who received raises from the Board of Trustees. He stated that it may be time to consider consolidating committees/commissions/boards because it is getting difficult to fill some positions with volunteers. He mentioned a FOIA violation of the Board of Education. He stated that a complaint was filed that could have been mediated, but the Board chose to use their attorney. He requested that the FOIA be put up on the website.
- g. Tom Angelo restated that he was not at the meeting as a Board of Education member, but as a resident and taxpayer of Thompson.

13. Tax Refunds: None

14. Adjourn

- a. **Shaina Smith moved and Paul Lenky seconded the motion to adjourn.**
Kerstin Forrester- Yes Paul Lenky- Yes Shaina Smith- Yes
The motion carried unanimously.
- b. P. Lenky adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.

Tina Fox
Recording Secretary