



**TOWN OF THOMPSON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Tuesday, January 6th, 2015, 7:00 PM

Held in the Merrill Seney Room

PRESENT: P. Lenky, First Selectman; K. Forrester, Selectman; S. Smith, Selectman

PUBLIC PRESENT: Kevin Walsh, Sally White, Donald Pimental, Wayne O'Brian, Donald Brown, and others.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Lenky called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Mrs. Smith to approve minutes from the December 16th, 2014 Board of Selectmen's meeting. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Forrester. Corrections in minutes were made regarding the following: Under "Correspondence", on page 1, the comment accredited to Mrs. Forrester regarding NECCOG should have said that they need to proceed with caution when deciding which functions to consolidate to ensure that layers of cost are not added; under "Selectmen's Comments" it should have read the Public Hearing which is to be held instead of being phrased as past-tense; on page 2, in the second paragraph it should have been phrased as "also asked about the relief fund"; under the HVAC system it should be clarified that the project has to go out to bid; a correction of the word "case" which should have read "taste"; under "Citizen's Comments" the word "they" should be removed under Ms. White's comments; under Mr. Baer's comments the word "put" should be removed and it should be clarified that Mr. Baer presented a copy of a photograph not a photo of a photograph; under "Executive Session", Diana Couture's name should be corrected and it should state that her position was only approved through March, 2015; under the "Transfer Station" agenda item the word "of" needed to be added; on page 4 it should be rephrased from "also brought up" to "also recommended"; under "Citizen's Comments on Agenda Items" it should read "they are pretty lax"; on page 2, the 10th bullet, Mrs. Smith also discussed the sidewalks being in bad shape and asked about looking into grants; the motion under "Executive Session" was for the first quarter of 2015; it should read "River Mill" instead of "Belding Mill"; and under "Transfer Station Requests", in regards to the handicap price for the transfer station, it should read that their cards should match their plates rather than the price being attached to their plates.

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

- A motion was made by Mrs. Forrester to approve of the December 17th, 2014 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith. Corrections in minutes were made regarding the following: It should state minutes of the Special Meeting; B. Lynch is Brian Lynch, the moderator; the date should have read Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 instead of Thursday, December 18th, 2014; Ms. Chinatti instead of Mrs. Chinatti; the spelling of cul'de sac; on page 4 it should say built; land on the site instead of "landsite"; the removal of a blank bullet under number four; and lastly the spelling of Mr. Savigne's last name.

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

2.) CORRESPONDENCE:

- Mrs. Forrester stated that the tax collection report through December 31st, 2014 came in with very positive results. Net taxes collected were up 4% points from last year and the total tax office collection was up 5% from last year.
 - Mrs. Forrester stated that they received an e-mail from Ryan Lajoie, Chairperson of the Economic Development Commission, which detailed his resignation. Mrs. Forrester suggested that they make a motion to add a "Discussion on the Economic Development Commission" to the agenda.
 - A motion was made by Mrs. Forrester to add "Discussion on the Economic Development Commission" to the "Other Business" section. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith.
- Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes

- Mrs. Forrester also stated that EDC member Brian Santos sent out an e-mail regarding his decision to stay on with the EDC, yet he also explained in that e-mail that due to his business he may not be able to attend many meetings.
- Mrs. Forrester stated that an e-mail was received from Gail Livingstone which requested that she receive advanced notice for Starr Road-related items that would be on the agendas for meetings; Mrs. Livingstone cited the Freedom of Information Act in this correspondence. Mrs. Forrester responded that the agenda goes out enough time before meeting to already make the town of Thompson compliant with FOIA.
- Mr. Lenky stated that he received from the Town Planner an e-mail that a company was looking for an area near the mill with 20,000-50,000 square feet. This company is a technology company which makes specialized batteries. Mr. Lenky further stated that he Town Planner sent this forward to Shawn Donahue for them to look at.
- Mr. Lenky stated that he received from the Building Office that for the month of December there were 34 permits valued at \$726,774.75, total fees valued were \$7,454.
- Mr. Lenky stated that he received a letter from CCM regarding prescription plan cards which also stated that so far citizens of Thompson have saved over \$15,100.
- Mr. Lenky received an e-mail from Gabriel Fernandez regarding the recent Shopper's Guide ad on page 49 which says libelous; the e-mail said the issue was upsetting but may have flaws and should be reported to the Town Attorney.
- Correspondence was received from Thames Valley, NECASSA, and others looking for money in the budget for the next fiscal year.
- A meeting for the Tourtellotte Board of Trustees will take place on January 7th, 2015.
- Two Public Hearings regarding FOIA violations will be on January 21st, 2015; one is against the Chairman of the Board of Assessment Appeals and the other one is against the Chairman and his Board members. These will be January 21st, 2015 at 11:00 AM.

3.) SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS:

- Mrs. Forrester offered everyone a Happy New Year.
- Mrs. Smith thanked the public for everyone who came out to the Public Hearing on December 17th, 2014.
- Mrs. Smith suggested that they invite Town Clerk Barske to the next meeting to discuss his reasoning for asking for a term change.
- Mrs. Smith brought up a concern about snow not being cleared from the sidewalks in front of the TEEG Building.
- Mrs. Smith brought up an issue regarding Fire Departments putting up Christmas lights and town trucks taking down tree limbs on peoples' personal property. Mrs. Smith and the other Board members had a brief discussion regarding the jurisdiction of the Fire Departments and who they can serve and for what reasons. Mrs. Forrester explained that since they are volunteers and the equipment is privately owned they can't tell them how to use their equipment. Mrs. Smith stated that she also has seen Town Highway personnel doing similar things.
- Mrs. Forrester stressed that action needs to be taken in order to make the former TEEG building more presentable with plywood instead of old signs. She stressed that this is an issue that needs action instead of continuously talking about it.
- Mr. Lenky explained how people had been breaking in and staying in the building which is why the windows needed to be boarded up instead of replaced with new windows.
- Mrs. Forrester suggested that Mr. Lenky speak to Leo Adams about this issue.

4.) CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

- Donald Brown voiced his concerns regarding the Memorandum of Understanding between the town of Thompson and the State of Connecticut. Mr. Brown asked who wrote it and Mr. Lenky responded that the Recreation Department wrote it. Mr. Brown continued by stating that there were outright lies in the memorandum. Mrs. Smith suggested that Mr. Brown voice some of his concerns under Citizens Comments at the next meeting if he needed more sources with him to make his case as to why he disagreed with the Memorandum of Understanding. Mrs. Forrester then suggested that they add the issue as an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Kevin Walsh commented regarding the Discussion on the Economic Development Commission and suggested that the Board move the agenda item to before the second round of Citizens' Comments so that citizens in town could have the opportunity to comment on the issue.

- A motion was made by Mrs. Forrester to move “Discussion on the Economic Development Commission” from the “Other Business” section to instead be listed as item 12A. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith.
Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes
- Mr. Walsh continued his comments by stating that he believed the Tourtellotte family would be very disappointed in the state of the former TEEG Building on Main Street, further stating that the building had been completely neglected.
- Sally White commented on the issue of the former TEEG Building’s condition by suggesting that the town fix the building up and then have a lottery to offer it as a home for teachers. Ms. White continued by stating that she believes the frame of the building is salvageable and that renovation would be possible. Ms. White also commented that she believes the town should consider a foundation for Paul Baer for all of the research he has done to help the town. Ms. White then commented on the agreement with the State and town regarding the Recreation Department and said that it included outright lies. Ms. White also commented regarding Starr Road and stated that it is not a town road past the cul’de sac. Ms. White then explained that if the town brings a truck up to Starr Road that they will see some civil disobedience take place.
- Donald Pimental commented regarding the Starr Road issue and stated that from 1948 until 1973 Starr Road was not even on the list of roads, that from 1973 until 1990 the road was listed as .15 miles unimproved, and that from 1991 until 2014 it was listed as .15 miles improved road. Mr. Pimental then stated that he was not sure where the .339 miles of unimproved road came from. Mr. Pimental also cited maps where the legend shows unimproved. Mr. Lenky responded that Mr. Pimental’s deed is also a legal document and that the deed says Starr Road. Mr. Pimental also cited minutes from 1978 which states that 17 feet was given to lot 6. There was then a discussion between Mr. Lenky, Mrs. Forrester, and Mr. Pimental regarding documents of roads in town provided by Leo Adams.
- Kevin Walsh commented that Mr. Burns said at the Public Hearing that a legitimate source was needed and that the Board agreed to supply evidence. Mr. Walsh then stated that the Board failed to take action within 21 days in regards to the petition. Mr. Walsh then explained that trust was lost and that Mr. Lenky should have said from the beginning that he had worked for Mr. Rawson years ago.

5.) STRATOS STUDIO – MONTHLY MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT PROPOSAL:

- A motion was made by Mr. Lenky to approve the monthly maintenance and support proposal for Stratos Studio. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Forrester.
Mr. Lenky – Yes, Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mrs. Smith – Yes

6.) RESOLUTION – HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT:

- A motion was made by Mrs. Forrester for the Board of Selectmen to approve the Resolution for the town of Thompson to enter into contract with the Connecticut State Library for Historic Documents Preservation Grant. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith.
Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes

7.) DARKNESS TO LIGHT PROGRAM – RELIEF FUND:

- Mrs. Smith led a discussion regarding the Darkness to Light Program as a relief fund for child sexual abuse victims in the community. Mrs. Smith explained that it usually this program includes 2 or 3 training sessions and that it has been done in the past but never spearheaded by a municipality. Mrs. Smith explained that there is a trainer in the area, Dr. Kesselman, and that it would cost \$250 per session. Mrs. Smith also brought up the idea of the Board members offering up their salary. Donations through local businesses in town such as restaurants, Citizen’s National Bank, etc. Call-in donations through WINY was another suggestion. Mrs. Forrester asked for more information about the training sessions and Mrs. Smith explained that coaches, teachers, community leaders, etc. could be taught some of the cues to recognize child abuse through the training sessions. Mrs. Forrester also asked about a potential target goal for funds to be raised and Mrs. Smith suggested \$1,000.00 which Mrs. Forrester agreed would be her recommendation as well. Mrs. Smith asked if they should tentatively schedule a first training session and both of the other Selectmen agreed that they should.

8.) SOLAR POWER PURCHASE PROPOSAL – ALEX FOX:

- Mr. Alex Fox of C-Tech Solar gave a presentation to the Board regarding a project that would be sold to two or more municipalities and would enable them to save substantially on electricity costs through the use of electricity generated through C-Tech Solar’s Solar Farm property located on 1 Ballard Road. The presentation yielded some lengthy discussions between Mr. Fox and Mrs. Forrester but it was explained

that the project would be done through a process called virtual net metering which involves a solar farm being set up and would involve a power-purchase agreement with the town. Mr. Fox explained that they typically like to have a 20-year deal in place and that through the agreement the town would be saving the delta which potentially could be up to 50% savings on electricity. Mr. Fox explained that in order to be approved by CL&P for this process they would need an agreement in place with a municipality. Mrs. Forrester asked Mr. Fox if he had gone to Planning & Zoning yet and he said that they had not but that they were discussing with Inland Wetlands prior to going to P&Z. Mrs. Forrester brought up concerns over being liable if they can't find another municipality and Mr. Fox assured her and the other Board members that the only obligation would be to pay just like an electric bill. When asked when he could see this starting Mr. Fox stated anywhere from Q4 of 2015 to April 1st, 2016 at the latest. Mr. Fox further explained that this is a photovoltaic process which involves the sun producing DC electricity which the Green Bank/C-Tech Solar turns to AC. The idea of leasing property on town-owned land also came up as a way for the town of Thompson to potentially produce additional revenue through this project. Mr. Fox did, however, explain that existing agreements could preclude the town from entering into this one which is also why the potential agreement states that the town may not negotiate with other companies.

9.) EDC PROJECT PROPOSAL

- Mrs. Forrester spoke briefly about how she attended the November meeting of the Economic Development Commission due to their wanting more direction and input from the Board of Selectmen. Mrs. Forrester suggested then, and again reiterated at this Board of Selectmen meeting, the need for Thompson to have an economic identity; she elaborated that the lack of economic identity in Thompson is partially because many important places in town such as the public schools, library, and town hall are all technically part of North Grosvenordale and many people from outside of town think of Thompson Hill when they hear Thompson and some view N. Grosvenordale as separate. It was also brought up that the zip codes and post offices for N. Grosvenordale and Thompson differ and some businesses opt to have a post office box in Thompson rather than N. Grosvenordale because of the Thompson identity being beneficial to business. With roughly 10 villages making up the town of Thompson, Mrs. Forrester explained that developing an overall economic identity would be an important goal and a project which would be perfect for the Economic Development Commission to take on. The other Selectmen agreed with Mrs. Forrester that rallying the town around the Thompson identity would be beneficial economically for businesses in town.
- A motion was made by Mrs. Smith to have the Economic Development Commission look into creating a common economic identity for the town of Thompson. This motion was seconded by Mr. Lenky.
Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes, Mrs. Forrester – Yes

10.) BOY SCOUT PROCLAMATIONS – EAGLE SCOUT RECIPIENTS:

- Mr. Lenky read off the names and formally recognized the most recent Eagle Scout recipients, dated January 3rd, 2015. These Eagle Scout recipients are: Jacob D. Houghton, Lee A. Gendron, Benjamin C. Keebler, Zachary T Rood, Connor J. Shea, and Dylan P. Perrin.

11.) APPOINTMENT TO ETHICS COMMITTEE – JASON AKANA:

- After a very brief discussion, the Board of Selectmen decided to table the appointment of Jason Akana to the Ethics Committee pending his completion of the Volunteer Application form.

12.) ROAD UPDATES:

- Mr. Lenky stated that the only update he had was that the Town Highway workers had been cleaning catch basins and that guide posts had been replaced in the areas of West Thompson Road and Ravenelle Road.
- Mrs. Forrester made the suggestion of having Mr. Adams provide the Board with a list of what projects are being done and when by the Town Highway workers.

12A.) DISCUSSION ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION:

- Mrs. Forrester read EDC Chairman Ryan Lajoie's letter of resignation which cited a lack of direction from the town and the Board of Selectmen as one of his reasons for choosing to step down. Mrs. Forrester then explained that having served on the EDC in the past that she was familiar with the points that Mr. Lajoie made in his letter and also stressed the importance of the EDC having a full board as they currently only have 4 members with only 3 who regularly attend the meetings. Mrs. Forrester suggested that they advertise for volunteers for the EDC so that they will have a full board. Mrs. Forrester also suggested that the Town Planner attend more EDC meetings. The Thompson Business Association and their relationship with the EDC was also briefly discussed and it was brought up that Brian Yacino is a member of both the TBA and the EDC. A lengthy discussion took place with both other Selectmen agreeing with Mrs. Forrester that having more direction for the EDC, along with a full board, are both important. Mrs. Smith stressed,

however, that the EDC should not be overly reliant on the Board of Selectmen for direction. Mrs. Smith also suggested to Mr. Lenky that he speak to Ryan Lajoie about what things could be done to improve how the EDC functions. Mrs. Forrester suggested to Mr. Lenky that he have an advertisement put in the Shopper's Guide to ask for volunteers for the Thompson EDC. The Selectmen also discussed the potential for a grant application for consulting in order to get the EDC back on track.

13.) CITIZENS' COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

- Kevin Walsh commented regarding the potential solar project and asked if the town still has a Renewable Energy Commission. Mrs. Forrester responded that the Solar Committee is currently inactive and that it'd be difficult for them to say no to this particular deal. Mrs. Forrester added that, from an economic standpoint, this is a very good deal. Mr. Walsh shifted the focus to the role of committees in town and touched on the issue with the EDC, stating that the town of Thompson is sometimes bipolar as they grapple with being rustic vs. growth. This led to a brief discussion with Mrs. Forrester regarding the importance of the town of Thompson creating an economic identity.
- Wayne O'Brian commented that the town of Thompson needs a big identity the way Worcester, Massachusetts has a big identity despite also being comprised of smaller villages. Mr. O'Brian also commented that he sees the town employees working hard whenever he encounters them.

14.) TAX REFUNDS:

- Mrs. Smith made a motion to approve of the following tax refunds: Ryan M. Auger - \$15.92; Lance M. Ducharme - \$21.61; Peter J. Giza - \$14.82; William P. Gould - \$2.86; Robert W. Werge Jr. and Dolores R. Werge - \$66.67; Donald L. White II - \$110.69; Steven Winiowski - \$7.64; and Wayne O'Brian - \$1567.50, \$204.02, and \$208.10. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Forrester.
Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes

15.) OTHER BUSINESS:

- None.

16.) ADJOURNMENT:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Forrester to adjourn at 9:22 PM. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith.
Mrs. Forrester – Yes, Mrs. Smith – Yes, Mr. Lenky – Yes

Documented and transcribed by Andrew Richardson, Recording Secretary