

Town of Thompson, Connecticut
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
May 8, 2007

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at 7:30 pm at the Quinebaug Fire Station.

PRESENT:

A. David Babbitt, First Selectman, Kathleen A. Hiatt, Selectmen, Lawrence K. Groh Jr. Selectman, Joseph Gaucher, Charles Paquette, Leo Adams, Gary Lee, Lynn Landry, Al Landry, Patricia Bodreau, Joseph Donovan Sr., Alice Kimball, Betty Leclair, Phyllis E. Willett, Charles Seney, Steve Benoit

Mr. Babbitt called the meeting to order May 8, 2007 at 7:30 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of April 24, 2007 – *Larry Groh asked for a correction regarding the National Honor Society. Mr. Groh Abstained from voting because his son Corey belongs to the Society. Update the Union Negotiations.* With correction Mr. Groh made a motion to accept the minutes, Kathy Hiatt seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Minutes of Special Selectmen's meeting of April 27, 2007. Kathy Hiatt made a motion to accept as presented, Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Minutes of Special Selectmen's Meeting of April 30, 2007 – Larry Groh mentioned that we make a correction regarding the 9:25 recess. Motion was made then we went into recess. Kathy Hiatt made a motion that we accept the minutes as corrected, Larry Groh, seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Minutes of Special Selectmen's Meeting of May 7, 2007, Larry Groh made a motion to accept the minutes, Kathy Hiatt, seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Minutes of Special Selectmen's meeting in Executive Session May 8, 2007. Larry Groh asked for correction as to when they went into Executive Session *and that was for interviews of Assessors position*. The next correction is to allow the 1st Selectman, delete the word *allow and on the next line cross out accept and cross out adjourn because we did not adjourn* Larry Groh made a motion to come out of Executive session. Larry Groh made a motion to accept the minutes with the above changes. Kathy Hiatt was not at this meeting.

Kathy Hiatt	abstained
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Babbitt stated the correspondence he received dealt with Renee Waldron attending the Park & Recreation Liability and understanding of legal issues. This pertains to our Town camp program that we run in the summer.

Mr. Babbitt stated he has received a revised calendar for the Thompson Public Library. The Library will be closed on Friday, May 25th and Saturday May 26th.

Mr. Babbitt attended a NESCASA annual meeting at this meeting they salute people from various towns. Our nominee this year was John Gardie, John has been a Boy Scout leader for over 14 years and has also coached in Recreation in Church league basketball. He was saluted at the meeting.

Mr. Babbitt stated a letter he received is an appointment of auditor's notification. Our Financial Director, Mike Martin will take care of completing that form.

Mr. Babbitt stated a couple of proposed changes in by-laws. Mr. Babbitt will be attending an annual meeting on Friday night.

Mr. Babbitt stated Connecticut Water sent out their annual letter and it stated that our sodium levels are at 41 mil per liter. This pertains to the public water supply in Grosvenordale, and North Grosvenordale. It is slightly higher.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we had a satisfied customer at the Town Hall. We received a letter thanking Alvan Hill, Donna Hall, John Mahon, Judy Rondeau, Maureen Marcoux and all members of the Zoning Board of appeals.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he put out a press release which was sent to the Worcester Telegram, Webster Times, Villager, Norwich Bulletin, and WINY Radio. To advise that we were holding the Selectmen's meeting at the Quinebaug Fire Dept.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he sent letters out to the Volunteer of the Year, John Rice and Citizen of the Year, Joe Iamartino. A banquet will be held at the Lodge of Elks in Putnam, CT on Tuesday, May 15th.

Mr. Babbitt stated the problem at the Citgo station at 440 Riverside Drive, request for information as to who the general contractor was etc., by a resident of our town. This issue is also being taken up by Planning & Zoning on Monday May 21.

Mr. Babbitt stated he received a thank you letter from Don Brown, Konionia School of Sports for having a Special Selectman's meeting at Konionia.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we made Channel 3 News today regarding the rats in Grosvenordale. What we've done is have a number of people get involved with this, we've taken this seriously. The Department of Health has issued a public health notice.

Mr. Babbitt stated he received a report from Troop D.

Mr. Babbitt mentioned a nomination from Joel Hiatt, Chairman Small Cities Advisory committee which they moved to other business. David Babbitt made a motion to move this to other business 14A. Kathy Hiatt seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Mr. Babbitt mentioned that he received a letter from Anthem Blue Cross stating that they have designated a single person from Blue Cross to handle all our insurance problems until all glitches are resolved. We will have a designated contact and phone number for one month.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS

Mr. Babbitt stated that he had interviews for Inland-Wetlands Commission. One has been chosen.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he met with Donna Grant to put the finishing touches on our grant application for the Thompson Wellness Center which will be at the Thompson Medical Center. The grant is off to Hartford. This Grant should bring us \$40,000 with a promise of an additional \$40,000. It will be a regional center serving Woodstock, Putnam and probably Pomfret.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he has attended two budget workshops. Budget has been approved by the Board of Finance. For those of you who don't know that budget currently stand at 1.35 mil increase over last year.

Mr. Babbitt attended the NECOG meeting. They had speakers from CL&P and they said that they are doing all they can to keep our increases down. One of the biggest problems is that there are no generation plants in CT., being built or even thought about.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we've had an interview committee for the Assessor position. We interviewed candidates and set-up interviews for the Selectmen which happened this morning. We have selected a person. We have one more meeting with the Selectmen and then we will announce the new employee.

Mr. Babbitt stated that negotiation sessions are going on. We've been meeting regularly and will continue to meet.

Mr. Babbitt stated that they met with the Department of Safety at the Quinebaug Fire Station; they were very impressed with the building. We are trying to get our \$300,000.00 so that we can finish the building. We have a Grant from the Governor but they put it in the Department of Safety because it's a fire safety and they have never handled one of these grant, so they are being very careful so that no mistakes are made, for this reason it has taken us almost a year to get the money. Hopefully, within a month we should start to see some of the money.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he met with the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, Sally White and Kevin Kennedy, our new Planner Developer. We are trying to get that group going again. Sally White is the Chair of that committee and we are hoping that the committee will have another meeting with Kevin Kennedy sometime in May

Mr. Babbitt stated that they had a Special Selectmen's meeting at 7:00 am to establish our newspaper ad regarding our annual Town meeting. We had to have this ready for Monday so that it got in the Newspaper for Friday.

Mr. Babbitt stated that final interviews for the Assessor. Hopefully, this person will be on board by the first of June.

Mr. Babbitt stated that tomorrow morning a meeting will be held regarding Pandemic Flu at NECOG.

Mr. Babbitt stated that the springtime festival awards dinner will be Tuesday night.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he will be on WINY on Wednesday, May 16th

Mr. Babbitt stated that the Board of Finance will be meeting on Thursday, Mr. Babbitt stated he would not be able to attend that meeting, Kathy Hiatt said that she would attend in his absence.

Mr. Babbitt stated that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on the 21st of May at the Library Community Center.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he will be having a meeting with GIS. We are trying to get GIS established in the Town Hall. This will be used a lot in the Assessors office as well as in the Planning office. We have a couple of Grant that will cover all this.

Mr. Babbitt stated that Buckley Hill Road should be under construction within the next two week.

Mr. Babbitt stated that sweeping is almost complete. The drain clear came in, and they are being cleaned.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we had 2 auctions properties. One of the properties got \$170,000 and the property at near Webster Lake got \$29,000. The Town will get the taxes due. Kathy Hiatt clarified that this was something the courts ordered not the Town.

Mr. Babbitt stated that the approval for Mary Master for Small Cities and John Ryzewski is the Inland Wetlands nominees.

Kathy Hiatt stated that a celebration honoring Memorial Day at the Middle School on Friday, May 25th had no other details. Larry Groh stated that he could make the celebration.

Larry Groh wanted to thank all the volunteers and the people who organized the Town Clean-up.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we are working on an ordinance pertaining to the appointments of Constables. We will be appointing Constables, they will not be on the ballot. This has been agreed upon by both the Republican and the Democratic Town Committee. With the new ballots and new voting machines it would be very cumbersome.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Alice Kimball stated that she was told that she would be receiving her late husband's abatement for being a voluntary fire fighter from our Tax Collector Rene Morin. She proceeded to say that she received a letter from our Town Attorney St. Onge that she would not be receiving his abatement. Mr. Babbitt stated that he will further investigate.

Larry Groh asked if we had talked to the town attorney. Joe Donovan stated that something should be done to correct the problem so that it does not happen to anyone else. Mr. Kimball had served 10 months prior to his death.

Larry Groh asked if we could make a motion to put this on the Agenda under 14B so that we could discuss this issue. Larry Groh made a motion to put on Agenda 14B, Kathy Hiatt seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

Joe Gaucher mention that we will be re-doing Buckley Hill. Mr. Gaucher said that he had been passed twice on Buckley Hill, if we fix that road it will make it worst for speeding. Mr. Babbitt said that we will notify the resident State Trooper.

Ida Ransom – Messier Road, near the soccer field find people go racing by. What happened to the Grant money to purchase Radar Guns?

Charlie Paquette – 36 Terrace Drive - He stated that he has never seen the Selectmen to review Board of Education item or Wetlands item or Conservation item. I am curious why you put the condo project on Azud Road on your Agenda which this item is a Zoning item. Mr. Babbitt took the time to answer Mr. Paquette. Many residents keep asking what you are going to do about taxes. Over the last 32 years we have had industrial land that has produced zero taxes for any industries. We infrequently have people that come to town that promises a project that will generate tax money in excess of \$500,000 to \$600,000 dollars per year. We have many doubters, and everybody thinks they have an answer but not one of these doubters comes forward with a way to find or generate tax dollars. Mr.

Babbitt stated that this is an opportunity for us and we don't want to miss it. Further discussion continued.

PRESENTATION AZUD ROAD PORJECT

Mr. Peter Venuto is the proponent of the project and Janet Blanchett is the representative from J&D Engineering. Mr. Venuto presented drawing of this project and explained it all. He then turned it over to Janet to give the history of the project and what they have done to satisfy the Zoning Commission. The property is about 45 acres at the intersection of Route 12 and Azud and Ballard Road. The property is currently zoned industrial and when Peter came to her with a concept of developing Commercial and multi family on it. Janet mentioned that there would be a problem with Zoning. In Thompson the only zone that allows multi families is the R20 which also allows single families. If we were allowed to ask for a zone change to go to R20 it would open up the possibilities for someone to build single family houses which are known to be a tax drain and not a revenue generator. This was brought up at preliminary discussions with the Planning & Zoning Commissions and we were encouraged to think of about a new approach. We wrote a new zone called the Neighborhood Commercial Zone which allows for mix use developments Commercial and multi family residential but did not allow construction of new single family homes. This zone was approved by Planning & Zoning Commission members. February an application was submitted to re-zone this property for the new Neighborhood Commercial Zone and that Zoning change was denied. One of the reasons was that it was industrial and the Town wanted to hold on to their Industrial land. Mr. Venuto mentioned that he is not ignorant of the fact that what Charlie Paquette brought up that these are Zoning & Planning issues and that Mr. Venuto has to deal with the Zoning & Planning Board. Their were comments made at a Planning & Zoning meeting that a bus full of kids got off that bus at Thompson Hills West. There were only 3 students that got off that bus at Thompson Hills West. They have 47 condos and 3 students that go to our schools. At one of the public hearings a board member stated that there were a dozen kids climbing that hill. Two students go to our high school and one goes to Ellis Tech. Discussion continued.

COST SHARING

Cost sharing the Towns Security System with the Schools. The Board of Education has asked us if we would consider whether or not we would be

willing to go along with the Board Of Education on this. This system will only include the Town Hall and the School. The Highway Department has its own security system. Much discussion continued and it was decided that the Board of Selectmen would like more information on this. Kathy Hiatt made a motion that we tell the Board of Finance that we are interested in going forward inconjunction with the BOE pending what the cost will be, because we have an independent quote of 12,000. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

MOU GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION DATA

Memorandum of Understanding - The purpose of this is to get all Street names, most up-to- date 911 maps, this could be a project for the Town Planner but Mr. Babbitt has to be the person to certify it. We are joining it For free. Kathy Hiatt made a motion allow or authorize Dave Babbitt to sign the memorandum of understanding representation the participating municipality in all regards to this geographic information data system as long as the cost to the Town is nothing. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

GRANT APPLICATION

Authority to sign CT State Preservation Grant. Kathy Hiatt made a motion that we have a resolution that resolves that A. David Babbitt as the First Selectman is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the CT State Library for historic documents preservation grant. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
A. David Babbitt	yes

EXCHANGE SERVER

This appropriation of \$12,000 has been approved by the Board of Finance we need to formally approve it. We are not in compliance with Federal E-Mail Laws. We are to retain E-Mails and we have to retain them forever. This Exchange Server will bring us in compliance. Larry Groh made a motion to have David Babbitt notify the Board of Finance to appropriate \$12,000 for the Exchange Server to be in compliance with Federal Law. Kathy Hiatt seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

LIBRARY HVAC UPGRADE

This is a request from the Library Board. It is a control panel that is in their system which is in need of repair. This was put in next year's budget. The Board of Finance has urged us to put in a request to them and they will honor it. Kathy Hiatt made a motion to support the library Board of Trustees request for funds for the HVAC system control panel of \$14,000 be taken out of this years monies and that David Babbitt go forward to Board of Finance with our request. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

KOINONIA AND QUADDICK

We had a Special Selectmen's Meeting April 30. Mr. Babbitt stated that we had received a letter from Mr. Brown. Kathy Hiatt said that she had a letter from Renee where she had a few questions when we went on the walk and she verified with the State that while we are not certified her staffing is in compliance and her plan is in compliance with the State. Kathy Hiatt had some comments regarding Mr. Brown's letter. Kathy stated that she was the person who had asked for the walk through. The first one was that they want to send out another hand out through the schools system. If we did it for Koinonia would we have to do it for the Dance studio if they had a summer program or other business anything else in town.

Not sure if the school would be willing to contract the buses to Mr. Brown or what the cost would be. Kathy Hiatt stated that she would be willing to go forward and consult the school system and check on the legality of this. Kathy Hiatt made a motion that Mr. Babbitt forward a letter to the Recreation Commission and Mr. Brown telling them that the Board of Selectmen would support them seeking further legal guidance and consulting with the school system to see if there is a feasible cost neutral to the Town. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	yes
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

RIVERMILL/SMALL CITIES

Shawn Donohoe, President of River Mills. Regarding Small Cities Grant. Mr. Donohoe is looking for the BOS to allow the excess collateral to be released place it in a second position on the mill behind a traditional financing source and allow the new owners to move forward. Kathy Hiatt stated that not only did the new owners pay the \$8,000 they also got a two (2) year moratorium on making any payment into small cities. Much discussion went on regarding Mr. Donohoe and his other business ventures in the Town. David Babbitt made a motion that the Town take the 2nd position on the mortgage at the mill which is at 929 Riverside Drive and that the \$384,000 that is owned would be placed on that at the recommendation of the BOS to the Town attorney. Kathy Hiatt seconded. Al Landry stated that since Mrs. Hiatt's husband is involved with Small Cities and suggested we check the legalities of her vote. Kathy Hiatt abstained from voting till we get legal clarification.

Kathy Hiatt	Abstained
Larry Groh	No
David Babbitt	yes

OTHER BUSINESS

Small Cities Advisory Committee is requesting that we nominate Barbara Pickett who is will to serve as an alternate if the BOS will appoint her. Mr.

Babbitt made the motion to appoint Barbara Pickett to Small Cities alternate. Larry Groh seconded.

Kathy Hiatt	Abstained
Larry Groh	yes
David Babbitt	yes

TAX ABATEMAN

This is the tax abatement for Brian Kimball – Mr. Kimball 2 006 past away in 2006, he had served 10 month on the Voluntary Fire Department in Quinebaug. She was told by Rene Morin, Tax Collector that she would be receiving his abate man. Mrs. Kimball stated that she received a letter from Town Attorney St. Onge that she would not be receiving her husbands abatement. Kathy Hiatt stated that she doesn't know all the rules under which an abatement can be granted, can we do it under another rule.

Mr. Babbitt stated that we will table this for this meeting until we talk to Attorney St. Onge again. Larry Groh made a motion to release the tax abatement to Mr. Kimball's spouse according to the tax abatement, Kathy Hiatt asked if this was being done under the tax abatement ordinance for fire fighters, this is a case by case basis? Mr. Babbitt stated that he is uncomfortable not because he doesn't want to award this but because we are on legal grounds. Mr. Babbitt will be talking to Attorney St. Onge once again. Kathy Hiatt is in favor of this abate man but she needs to be sure we are doing the right thing. Mr. Babbitt stated that we will delay this one more meeting till we get a clearing from town attorney.

Mr. Babbitt adjourned the meeting at 10:00 pm