



## SELECTMEN'S MEETING

April 22, 2008

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. in the Merrill Seney Community Room.

**PRESENT:** Lawrence K. Groh, Jr., First Selectman; Sarah F. White, Selectman; Kathleen A. Hiatt, Selectman; Leo Adams, Director of Public Works; Charles Seney; George Elmes; Joseph Gibbons; Paul Horanzy; Don Brown; Joseph Gaucher; William Simmons; Ruth Simmons; Bobby Schwend; Dave Housman; Timothy West; Peter Nalewajk; Brendan Harney; Jennifer Harney; Lynn Adams; Kevin Racine; Kevin Walsh; James Esslinger – Worcester Telegram & Gazette; WINY Radio; other concerned citizens

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's meeting of April 1, 2008 with one correction.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Abstain</i>

### CORRESPONDENCE

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut in regard to the reduction in state aid for the PILOT program and Mashantucket Pequot Mohegan Fund Grant.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection addressed to the Department of Health in regard to the Thompson Hill Sewer project.
- Mr. Groh presented a copy of a Town ordinance in regard to the Town's membership to the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Connecticut State Police in regard to re-arrest warrants.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Werge in regard to Thompson Together's efforts in gaining non-profit status.

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- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Connecticut State Police in regard to monthly calls for service.
  - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Tri-State Trek in regard to their certificate of insurance.
  - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation in regard to paving Route 21 from Route 44 to Route 193.

#### **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS**

- Mr. Groh informed the public that the town-wide clean-up is happening and that it is nice to see people out there pitching in.
- Mr. Groh stated he is eliminating the use of plastic bags in his household and encouraged residents to do the same.
- Mr. Groh stated that the Route 12 bridge by Jim's Hardware is going to be repaired and that he is meeting with the Department of Transportation and the Town's Director of Public Works in Norwich on Monday to discuss.
- Ms. Hiatt stated that she attended the opening of the Little League season and that it was a beautiful day. Ms. Hiatt said that the most exciting part is that the headquarters for Little League has put the championship in Thompson and the reason being is that they were impressed with Thompson Little League's safety record.
- Ms. Hiatt stated that she attended the Board of Finance meeting and that the Board of Finance voted to allow the Board of Selectmen to take \$9,750.00 to fund the mower, up to \$12,000.00 for the used AS400, and \$3,000.00 for the plotter/printer. Ms. Hiatt said that the Board of Finance recommended taking the funds out of contingency but that the Director of Planning & Development keeps his budget as tight as possible.

#### **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

- Mr. Brown spoke in regard to the NECCOG meeting on Friday about the Regional Recreation Center. Mr. Brown informed the Board of the membership of the Steering Committee and that there is no one from Thompson on that committee. Mr. Brown also pointed out that the letter says that Putnam was the first choice by a narrow margin and that Thompson and Woodstock were key donors. Mr. Brown asked the Board to find out the definition of key donor. Mr. Brown requested that this be added to the agenda for the next Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Groh stated that he asked questions at the last NECCOG meeting in regard to the Regional Recreation Center. Mr. Groh informed the audience that he asked how this center would affect area businesses. Mr. Groh explained that the response received was that studies have been done and there shouldn't be any impact to area businesses. Mr. Groh also stated that he was told that Thompson would not be asked to provide any funds for the project. A brief discussion followed.

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## **APPOINTMENT TO THOMPSON HOUSING AUTHORITY – JAMES SALI**

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to re-appoint Mr. James Sali to the Thompson Housing Authority for a term which ends October 31, 2012.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Discussion on Motion: Miss White asked how many years Mr. Sali has served and if anyone else has expressed any interest. A brief discussion followed.

## **APPOINTMENT TO RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – JAMES BELLAVANCE**

Mr. Groh presented a request from Mr. Bellavance to join the Renewable Energy Development Committee.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to appoint Mr. James Bellavance to the Renewable Energy Development Committee for an indefinite term.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-No</i>

Discussion on Motion: Miss White asked if there was an ordinance for this committee. Ms. Hiatt explained that this was the Hydroelectric Power Committee but once they exhausted the work on hydropower, the charter was changed to cover all renewable energy sources. Miss White stated that she knows Mr. Bellavance and that he would be a good person to be on the committee but that something should be done to not make the positions indefinite. Miss White stated that this should be reviewed every few years. Mr. Groh explained that this committee is like the Ordinance Review Committee. A brief discussion followed.

## **TOWN HALL PARKING LOT USAGE REQUEST**

Mr. Groh presented a request from the 2008 Project Graduation Committee to use the Town Hall parking lot for the purpose of holding a yard sale from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 3, 2008 during their can and bottle drive. Miss White expressed concerns that the letter does not state that the request is to use the Town Hall parking lot. Mr. Groh explained that the letter says that it is to be held beside the can and bottle drive which is scheduled to be held in the Town Hall parking lot.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to allow Project Graduation to use the parking lot along side their can and bottle drive on Saturday, May 3, 2008 for their yard sale from nine to noon with the following stipulations: One, would you please ask them to give you another memo stating they will be in the parking lot? Two, I don't know that we'll have any*

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*plantings out there, but would you just please communicate to them and ask them to just be careful of the shrubs and whatever plantings are out there?*

*Ms. Hiatt* -Yes

*Mr. Groh* -Yes

*Miss White* -Yes

#### **SCHOOL HOUSE POND / LITTLE POND REQUEST FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE**

Mr. Groh presented a letter from William Simmons in regard to the conditions of the road in the area of School House Pond.

Mr. Simmons explained that part of the roads have slipped into some pretty deplorable conditions. Mr. Simmons explained that a culvert washed out and completely collapsed leaving a three-foot hole in the road near Babula Road. Mr. Simmons explained that the residents on School House Pond and the Town cooperated in the past to pave the roads in the area. Mr. Simmons stated that the residents are here to solicit some cooperation again from the Town to restore the roads back to acceptable conditions and to come to some agreement for continuing maintenance.

Mr. Racine explained that they solicited pledges to raise the funds to pave the roads initially. Mr. Racine said that not enough money was raised to chip-seal the roads as recommended by the Director of Public Works. Mr. Racine explained that approximately \$7,000.00 was pledged and \$7,000.00 came out of the Association. Mr. Racine also stated that residents don't have the funds to repair the roads at this time. A lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Groh explained that in order for these private roads to be accepted by the Town they would have to meet the standards required in the Town's zoning regulations. The roads would have to be improved first and then sent to a Town Meeting for acceptance.

Miss White stated that she is concerned in terms of the reaction and the impact. Miss White stated that if there are road problems and safety issues with fire equipment that this needs to be considered but on the other hand there are other roads in town that are in pretty rough shape. Miss White said that if you have private roads and they need to be fixed and the residents can't afford to fix them, is it right to put that burden on the rest of the Town who also perhaps can't afford to have their taxes go up to now take on roads that have been private for decades? Miss White said that it is worthy of consideration however. A lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Simmons stated that the Director of Public Works had a metal plate be installed over the collapsed culvert as a temporary fix for safety reasons. Miss White questioned if Mr. Groh gave permission to put the metal plate on the road. Mr. Groh stated that he supported the Director of Public Works' decision to install the plate. Miss White stated that if the initiative was taken with Town people and the plate, then it needs to be put in there so that you can ensure reliable passage of emergency vehicles.

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Mr. Racine asked if it would be possible to create a tax abatement for residents who live on private roads so that they could pay for road improvements. Ms. Hiatt asked if the residents have enough money to pay for the culvert. Mr. Racine estimated that it would cost approximately \$5,000.00 to repair the culvert. A lengthy discussion followed.

A concerned citizen commented that there is a State boat launch on School House Pond that adds to the traffic on the roads as well.

Ms. Hiatt asked that the Director of Public Works and the Director of Planning & Development work on this issue and that Town Counsel is asked to comment on the legal liability if the Town goes in and repairs just the culvert.

Mr. Nalewajk commented that the road actually belongs to Mrs. Parker. Mr. Nalewajk said that he would provide the contact information for Mrs. Parker's attorney to the Selectmen's Office. A lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Groh stated that he believes the issue is the sinkhole. Mr. Groh stated that he would like to do some more research. Ms. Hiatt stated that she would like the Town to notify the State that the roads will be closed because they are impassible.

Mr. Groh stated that he would have the Director of Planning & Development look into State funding to repair the roads because of the State boat launch located on School House Pond.

Mr. Racine agreed to be the point of contact for the Association in regard to this issue.

#### **BUILDING FEES FOR CELL TOWER ON RICH ROAD**

Mr. Groh presented information to the Board on the cell tower on Rich Road. Mr. Groh asked the Board to decide whether or not to charge a building fee or a portion of the building fee for the cell tower.

Ms. Hiatt questioned whether or not there is information in the agreement between the Town and MCF Communications in regard to building fees. A lengthy discussion followed.

Miss White asked what would be the rationale for waiving the building fees. Mr. Groh stated that the only reason that this is before the Board is because the cell tower is on Town property and that the Town is benefiting from the tower. Miss White asked if this was being built on private property if the building fee would be waived. Mr. Groh stated that it would not but in this case, it is on Town property and the Town will be receiving revenue from the tower. A lengthy discussion followed.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to table this until we have the contract in front of us to see if this is a moot point or not.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

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Miss White

-Yes

### **CL&P STREET LIGHTS**

Mr. Groh presented information on the street light audit for the Town of Thompson. Mr. Groh also stated that the Board has been tabling the two street light requests from Mr. Navarro and Mr. Davis. Mr. Groh offered to table the agenda item for another meeting.

Miss White questioned what the issue is. Ms. Hiatt stated that the last time the Board discussed the street light requests that she believed Miss White asked to see the list of every street light in town.

Miss White asked what the street lights would cost to be installed and maintained. Mr. Groh explained that the information he provided lists the pricing for the street lights. A lengthy discussion followed.

*Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to table this until the next meeting.*

Mr. Groh

-Yes

Ms. Hiatt

-Yes

Miss White

-Abstain

### **FAIR HOUSING, ADA, TITLE VI DOCUMENTS**

Mr. Groh presented the Fair Housing Policy Statement, Fair Housing Resolution, Title VI Compliance statement and the ADA Grievance Procedure statement. Mr. Groh explained that these documents are expiring and need to be renewed.

Miss White asked if the language is precisely the same. Mr. Groh stated that it is exactly the same. Miss White stated that it is different as Kevin Kennedy's name is in there. Ms. Hiatt stated that Mr. Kennedy was appointed the Fair Housing Officer when he came on board.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt that the First Selectman, by signature, extends the current policies as they stand until our next Board of Selectmen's meeting at which time we'll take action on the new ones. Motion was not seconded.*

Miss White asked if there is not one word in here that has changed. Ms. Levesque checked all four new documents for any changes from the previous documents.

Miss White questioned who has been the Fair Housing Officer in the past. Mr. Groh explained that the Fair Housing Officer has always been the person who was the Economic Development Coordinator until the position was combined with the Grant Writer. Miss White stated that as in prior discussions she does not believe that it's proper to have an officer of the Town be someone who is not a resident and a taxpayer of the Town and cannot sign off on it (Fair Housing Policy Statement).



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*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we accept the Town of Thompson's Fair Housing Policy Statement as presented here tonight.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-No</i>

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we sign the Town of Thompson Fair Housing Resolution as presented.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Miss White commented that her name and Ms. Hiatt's name are switched on the documents. Ms. Levesque stated that in the past, the Title VI Compliance statement was normally signed by the First Selectman only. Miss White stated that she thinks that the Board should stick with uniformity and that if you are going to do paperwork correctly you've got to have the names in the right order. Ms. Hiatt agreed to come in and sign the documents once the names are in the right order.

*Motion made Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we sign the Town of Thompson Title VI Compliance document as set forward before us.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we sign the Town of Thompson ADA Municipal Grievance Procedure with procedure spelled correctly and the signatures in the correct order.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

#### **MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION – QUADDICK LAKE WEED MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

Mr. Groh presented the municipal resolution for the Quaddick Lake Weed Management project. Mr. Groh read the resolution to the audience. Mr. Groh explained that this resolution is required by the Department of Environmental Protection.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded Mr. Groh, that we sign the Resolution of Municipal Legislative Body concerning the Quaddick Lake Weed Management project as presented with the exception of the ranking of the signatures.*

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<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-No</i>

Discussion on Motion: Miss White stated that the wording of the resolution is inappropriate that states Municipal Legislative Body. Mr. Groh explained that this comes from the State of Connecticut. Miss White said that the State does not have it right and that she cannot sign this until that is changed. A brief discussion followed.

#### **LOCATION OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING - DISCUSSION**

The Board discussed holding the Annual Town Meeting at the School auditorium. Mr. Groh explained that the auditorium is now complete. Ms. Hiatt questioned the parking capacity. Mr. Groh stated that there is a lot of parking available at the School. Ms. Hiatt questioned if the Annual Town Meeting conflicts with any events at the School. Miss White asked if there could be signage directing people where to park and where the auditorium is located. The Board decided that if there is a conflict at the School, the Town Meeting would be held at the Thompson Public Library/ Community Center.

#### **BUCKLEY HILL ROAD PROJECT**

Mr. Groh informed the Board that the contractor for the Buckley Hill Road project is forced to pay prevailing wage for the project as well as increased costs for material. Mr. Groh stated that the contractor cannot complete the project for the bid price submitted in 2006. Mr. Groh presented information in regard to the original bid and the increase that was requested from the contractor due to increased costs. A lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Groh explained that if the Town decides to not go forward with the project that the Town would owe the State administrative fees and the Town would still have to fix the road. Mr. Groh also stated that the Town cannot be a subcontractor on the project but could sell material to the contractor.

Mr. Groh stated that if the Board has to go back to the Town for more money, then the project will have to go back to referendum. Mr. Groh said that he will be meeting with the contractor again to further discuss costs. A lengthy discussion followed.

#### **TOWN EASEMENTS FOR PRIVATE UTILITIES**

Mr. Groh presented a letter from Town Counsel in regard to a recommendation for a Town ordinance addressing easements for private utilities on Town property. Mr. Groh explained that this agenda item had been tabled at previous Selectmen's meetings.

Miss White stated that it is an interesting way to bring an ordinance to the Board and that this would not seem like a normal protocol.



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Mr. Groh asked the Board to decide where to go with this request. A lengthy discussion followed.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to table this until the next meeting.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Abstain</i>

## **TAX ABATEMENTS (2)**

Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Tax Collector in regard to proposed tax abatements. A brief discussion followed.

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to put this on the agenda for action for next meeting. Motion and second withdrawn.*

*Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to take no action on that third parcel, 0 Thatcher Road, at this time.*

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we put the two abatements, one for the small piece of land on New Road and one for 1395 Riverside Drive on the agenda for action at the next meeting.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

## **TAX REFUNDS (2)**

*Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to refund the following overpayments as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.*

<i>-Robert T Schwend</i>	<i>-\$520.97</i>
<i>-Hector Morin (deceased)</i>	<i>-\$24.94</i>

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

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## **EXECUTIVE SESSION – POTENTIAL SALE OF PROPERTY**

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt seconded by Mr. Groh, to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the potential sale of property at approximately 10:31 p.m.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

The Board came out of Executive Session at approximately 10:45 p.m.

No action taken.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Hiatt reminded the Board that there is a draft of the Grant spreadsheet and asked the Board to review it.

Ms. Hiatt asked that a book be created with Town of Thompson policies.

## **ADJOURN**

*Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Miss White, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:47 p.m.*

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Recorded and transcribed by:  
Tonya Levesque