



SELECTMEN'S MEETING

July 1, 2008

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, July 1, 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; Alvan Hill, Building Official; Charles Seney; Kevin Walsh; Ruth Simmons; David DaVia; Don Brown; Al Landry; Lynn Landry; David Szeredy; Andrea Szeredy; Gloria Harvey; Diana Couture; Winston Averill – Solid Waste Management; James Esslinger – Worcester Telegram & Gazette; 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 June 17, 2008 as presented.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Town Clerk in regard to telephone data lines in the Town Clerk's Office and the Thompson Probate Court.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we add this as agenda item #6G.

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

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Siting Council in regard to a public hearing on July 16, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in New Britain in reference to a proposed cell tower on the border of Putnam and Thompson in the Quaddick Lake area.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Troop D in regard to calls for service for the past three years.

-
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Siting Council in regard to a public hearing on August 5, 2008 in Putnam in reference to the proposed cell tower on Elmwood Hill Road in Putnam.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Siting Council in regard to the public hearing that was held in reference to the Rich Road cell tower. Mr. Groh stated that the letter informs the Town that the request to add an additional carrier was approved.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Town Clerk in regard to automated sportsmen's licenses.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Connecticut State Police in regard to monthly calls for service.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Ms. Levesque in regard to the Selectmen's Update publication schedule.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence in regard to a conservation consortium that is being recommended to include 15 towns.
 - Ms. Hiatt presented an e-mail that she sent to the Elections Bureau in regard to compensating Registrars.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

- Mr. Groh commented that Dr. Joseph Adiletta resigned from the Water Pollution Control Authority. Mr. Groh stated that the vacancy will need to be filled.
- Mr. Groh commented on the letter received from Mr. Franklin in regard to the IVS voting system which assists blind persons in voting. Mr. Groh stated that the Registrars are not required to hook up the system for referendums but are only required to hook up the system for elections.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, that as the Board that we send a letter requesting respectfully that the Registrar of Voters set up that system at each instance of voting whether it be a referendum or election of officials.

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

Discussion on Motion: Ms. Hiatt requested that the Registrars are asked what the associated costs would be to implement this system. Miss Hiatt also clarified that this would not be applicable at a Town Meeting.

-
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Director of Planning & Development in regard to a timeline of actions by the Town of Thompson in an effort to resolve the issues with the CITGO gas station on Riverside Drive. Miss White questioned why the Director of Planning & Development chose that particular date to start from as opposed to the entire timeline.
 - Mr. Groh commented that the treatment for weed management at Quaddick Lake will begin on July 9, 2008. The treatment will be for bladderwort.
 - Mr. Groh commented that he spoke with SAS Construction in regard to setting a deadline of July 11, 2008 to submit figures to the Town for the Buckley Hill Road project.
 - Mr. Groh commented that the ADA project for the Town of Thompson Town Hall is on its way and that CME has started its engineering studies.
 - Mr. Groh commented that the Hazardous Waste Collection Day went well on June 21, 2008.
 - Mr. Groh commented that the Rudzinski land swap was closed out on. Mr. Groh explained that this includes the Wilsonville hydro plant site and the water rights and that Mr. Rudzinski received the land on Owen Adams Road. Mr. Groh explained that this was approved by the Town on May 5, 2006 and was completed on June 30, 2008. A brief discussion followed.
 - Mr. Groh commented that he has requested an informal committee to discuss the Tourtellotte Memorial Trust. Mr. Groh stated that he requested that Raymond Faucher from the Board of Finance, Joseph Lindley from the Board of Education, Finance Director Michael Martin, a member from the community, Joseph Iamartino and himself as the First Selectman be members of this informal committee. Miss White suggested that the community member be someone not affiliated with any Town board, commission or organization in Town. Miss White also stated that a committee had been selected a while back and this committee is different. Miss White stated that there were names on a board that were going to be proposed. Mr. Groh stated that the only names on the board in his office are the Ordinance Committee members. A brief discussion followed.
 - Mr. Groh commented that he had a meeting with Christopher Stone from the DEP and Winston Averill in regard to a consent order issued on January 9, 2004 about the discharge of storm water. Mr. Groh asked Mr. Averill to speak in regard to the consent order. Mr. Averill explained that this relates to the permit that the Town has and that it includes six individual samples from three different parameters.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to add this as an agenda item right now.

Mr. Groh	-Yes
Ms. Hiatt	-Yes
Miss White	-Yes

Ms. Hiatt questioned how this was missed. Mr. Groh suggested that the Board review this information carefully and that the Board could discuss this at a future meeting. Miss White

questioned if the Town had a tracking system that documents notices of violations. Miss White also stated that it would be reasonable to ask the DEP to provide a list of all of those requirements that they have. A brief discussion followed.

- Mr. Groh asked Mr. Averill to comment on the Hazardous Waste Collection Day. Mr. Averill stated that it went well and that there were 120 participants.
- Miss White commented that there is a sheet included in the tax bills that states that without the aid from the State of Connecticut that the mill rate would be 31.42. Miss White said that it really astounded her that this statement would be made because it's very misleading and actually deceptive because it is presented as fact but it's not true. Miss White said that the townspeople would never vote through nearly 32 mills and that this is an editorial comment. Miss White questioned if there is a state statute and if there is a way to simply present what the statute requires without editorializing in a way that is misleading. Ms. Hiatt stated that this is under the cognizance of the Tax Collector as an elected official.
- Miss White commented that she received notification about the Thompson Public Library in regard to the budget cuts and that there have been ads in the Shopper's Guide as well. Miss White stated that the Library Board of Trustees makes the decision on how they will absorb and execute money they are granted from the Town. Miss White said that it's not necessarily accurate to say that the Library hours have changed due to budget cuts and that this is a choice that has been made by the people that have the authority to do that. Miss White stated that there are other choices that could have been made perhaps without changing the hours and that this is a little misleading.
- Ms. Hiatt commented that she has received several phone calls from people who want to know why the Board of Selectmen made the changes at the Library. Ms. Hiatt stated that she has advised people to contact the Library Board of Trustees.
- Miss White stated that perhaps some people don't realize that it is no longer allowable to permit people to volunteer to work hours at the Library and that this was most unfortunate. Ms. Hiatt explained that the Library's bylaws prohibit the use of volunteers.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

- Mr. Landry stated that it is ridiculous that we cannot have volunteers for any service in Town. Mr. Landry stated that the Town could not have volunteers for the Hazardous Waste Collection Day and had to pay an employee overtime to work the event.
- Mr. Landry stated that there needs to be a pamphlet that explains what each board and commission does for the Town of Thompson.
- Mr. Landry stated that he received his tax bill and asked why he is getting separate envelopes for different vehicles. Mr. Groh commented that he spoke with the Tax Collector when the envelopes were being stuffed. Mr. Groh stated that the Tax Collector said that the Tax Office makes every effort to combine tax bills.

-
- Mr. Brown commented that he has a recollection of the budget process and that he remembers asking if the Recreation department contributes to the cost of utilities at the Thompson Public Library for programs that are held there. Mr. Brown stated that if that money were paid to the Library that they may not have to close on Saturdays. Mr. Brown also commented that he found out that the Recreation Department is doing \$300,000.00 per year in programs and that they run their own bank. A brief discussion followed.
 - Mr. Walsh stated that he is in support of Mr. Brown's statement and that he pressed questions in regard to additional assets cash on hand at budget workshops. Mr. Walsh stated that the \$300,000.00 should have been disclosed at that time.
 - Mr. Walsh commented that there needs to be thorough investigation of grants.
 - Mr. Walsh offered a belated thank you for the Board's commitment in this year's budget process.
 - Mr. Landry suggested that the Board send a letter to the Library in regard to changing their by-laws to allow volunteers.

CHANGE IN LOCATION FOR DISTRICT III POLLING PLACE – DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUIRED

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that based on the letter we received from the Registrars and the review of the ordinance and the State Statutes that we authorize the Registrars to proceed in changing the site of the election for District III from St. Stephen's Church to the new Quinebaug Fire Department.

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

PROPOSED ORDINANCE – EASEMENTS FOR PRIVATE UTILITIES – DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUIRED

Mr. Groh explained that the Board discussed this at the last meeting with the question of one word in the ordinance which was bond / permits. Mr. Groh stated that he spoke with Charles Paquette and that the word should be "bond".

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we take the language that was presented by the Ordinance Committee and verified or checked by the Town Attorney concerning private utilities and roads and send it to a Town Meeting at the next convened Town Meeting for approval.

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

Miss White

-Yes

REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION FOR TRAINING REGISTRARS

Ms. Hiatt stated that the proposed language that the Registrars gave the Board never passed and that the existing statute is the one she provided to the Board before. Ms. Hiatt also stated that she spoke with someone from the Elections office for guidance. Miss White stated that it is her sense that the Registrars are already reasonably compensated.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, that we do not pay the additional \$35.00 and that we leave it at their yearly stipend to cover the customary activities of a registrar.

Miss White

-Yes

Ms. Hiatt

-No

Mr. Groh

-No

Discussion on Motion: Ms. Hiatt stated that when the budget was prepared for last year, conferences were included and that she has no problem setting a policy going forward but because this happened last year, it was done in good faith. Mr. Groh agreed with Ms. Hiatt's statement. Miss White stated that each of the preceding fiscal years they had a modest increase that would have covered something like that. Miss White stated that it is her sense that having looked at other towns that the Registrars are well compensated. A brief discussion followed.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that the First Selectman notify the Registrars that henceforth compensation of \$35.00 per day is part of their salary line item.

Ms. Hiatt

-Yes

Mr. Groh

-Yes

Miss White

-Yes

REGIONAL COMMUNITY Y.M.C.A. – JULY 10, 2008 SPECIAL SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOTIFICATION – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh informed the Board that he contacted Laurence Hale, co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Regional Community Y.M.C.A, who took advantage of the July 10, 2008 date at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Groh said that it would be a Special Selectmen's meeting and it would be held at the new School Auditorium. Mr. Groh stated that they will give us a presentation on the Regional Community Y.M.C.A. and that it will be a public forum that will be opened up for questions from the public. Mr. Groh stated that Jim Scherer, Chief Operating Officer of the Y.M.C.A. of the Greater Hartford Area, would also be present. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Brown commented that he went to the NECCOG meeting on Friday but that it wasn't held. Mr. Groh stated that the meeting was held on Thursday and nothing was discussed on the Regional Community Y.M.C.A. Mr. DaVia stated that the sources of funding were very vague. Mr. DaVia stated that when he asked about long-term funding he was told that all that was going to be addressed as the planning goes on.

Miss White explained to the audience that there was a grant application submitted by Putnam that stated \$3,000,000.00 in funding would be provided by towns.

PETITION IN REGARD TO TRAFFIC AND ROAD CONDITIONS ON WILSONVILLE ROAD – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh presented a petition in regard to traffic and road conditions on Wilsonville Road. Mr. Groh read the petition and supporting letter of concerns to the Board which included recommendations and requests involving speed limits, reflectors, s-curve warning signs and the prohibition of truck traffic on Wilsonville Road. Several residents expressed concerns in regard to these issues and the truck traffic being generated by a business in Thompson at the corner of Route 12 and Wilsonville Road. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Groh stated that he would contact the State to conduct a traffic study on Wilsonville Road.

Miss White suggested writing a letter immediately to the business saying that the Board is aware of consequences and of the Board's concerns and that the Board is going to be looking into this and to ask the business to take measures now in good faith to at least moderate their behavior. A lengthy discussion continued. Mr. Groh stated that he would contact the State Police to do radar on Wilsonville Road. The Board agreed to replace the s-curve warning signs.

The Board discussed the fact that there is a 25 mile per hour sign going in one direction and a 30 mile per hour sign going in the opposite direction.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, that we make them consistent on the s-curves to 25 miles per hour since it's already there.

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

Discussion on Motion: Mr. Groh stated that knowing the rules from the State, he cannot support the motion. Miss White stated that perhaps the 30 mile per hour sign is erroneous. Ms. Hiatt stated that the 25 and 30 are in different locations. A brief discussion followed.

A lengthy discussion continued. Mr. Groh stated that he would consult with the Director of Public Works on the Wilsonville Road issues. Mr. Groh also stated that he would speak with the Zoning Enforcement Officer on the truck issue.

Miss White commented on the lack of civility on the roads in general. Miss White stated that she has done a little more research and that she will be meeting with some people and one of the ideas is to do a review of the signs in Town. Mr. Groh stated that he would notify Andrea Szeredy of the progress on the Wilsonville Road issue.

LAND CONVEYANCE BY 200 ASSOCIATES – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh explained that this came in front of the Board a couple of months ago with the Tax Collector's request to abate the taxes for this property as the land on Thatcher Road was conveyed to the Town of Thompson as part of the settlement of a lawsuit involving the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Groh stated that the amount would be \$236.20.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to abate the \$236.20 on a parcel of land that is now Town-owned that was owned by 200 Associates, LLC as recommended by the Tax Collector.

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

REQUEST TO DISPLAY SIGN IN RIVERSIDE PARK – DEARY MEMORIAL ROAD RACE – ACTION REQUIRED

Mr. Groh presented a request to hang a banner for the Deary Memorial Road Race in Riverside Park. Mr. Groh stated that the banner would be hung up at the beginning of July and taken down the day of the Race on August 9, 2008.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Miss White, that we give Ms. Kopiacz permission to hang a banner on the Riverside Park fence for the Deary Memorial Road Race.

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

CELL TOWER, ELECTRIC AND TELEPHONE DISTRIBUTION EASEMENTS – MCF COMMUNICATIONS – ACTION REQUIRED

Mr. Groh explained that this was reviewed by Town Counsel and the Director of Planning & Development. Mr. Groh explained that this is to have electricity go to the Rich Road cell tower.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that the First Selectman sign the agreement presented in front of him with the stipulation that the agreement require the grantee to remove all of its above ground facilities but allow the grantee at its option to remove or not any underground facilities and to make sure that he, the First Selectman, maintains the Town's consistent position that they, MCF, the grantee, and not the Town, are responsible for any certificates of title or title guarantees which may be required by either utility company.

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

TAX ABATEMENTS FOR JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh presented information provided by East Thompson Volunteer Fire Department in regard to tax abatements for Junior Firefighters. Ms. Hiatt stated that this would require a change in the Town's ordinance.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Miss White, that we send this to the Ordinance Committee.

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

Discussion on Motion: Miss White asked why this would require a change to the ordinance. Miss White stated that it is her sense that the Town has an ordinance which allows qualifying firefighters to be eligible, and that if this firefighter is eligible then he should get the abatement. Mr. Groh and Ms. Hiatt explained that the ordinance states that the firefighter needs to reside and pay property taxes in the Town of Thompson in order to qualify for the abatement. Mr. Groh stated that the bill that was presented states that the parent of the junior firefighter would receive the abatement. Miss White stated that it is her sense that the ordinance allowed all eligible firefighters to receive the abatement. Ms. Hiatt stated that by definition in the ordinance, junior firefighters are not eligible. Ms. Hiatt read the applicable portion of the ordinance. Ms. Hiatt stated that the junior firefighter should be recognized and what better way than to make them eligible for the tax abatement. Ms. Hiatt said that this is a great idea but that the Board needs to do this the right way. Miss White stated that there is a state law that superseded the local ordinance. Mr. Groh stated that the state law says that providing the abatement is at the discretion of the municipality. A brief discussion followed.

STAFFING – BUILDING OFFICIAL'S OFFICE AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh explained that this agenda item was requested by Ms. Hiatt. Ms. Hiatt stated that she knows that there were unanticipated absences in the Building Official's Office and that there have been individuals out at the Highway Garage. Ms. Hiatt stated that a position was also not filled in Public Works. Mr. Groh stated that time-off requests are also being addressed. Mr. Groh explained that a staff member in the Building Official's Office has been out for a few weeks. Mr. Groh stated that there are funds in Professional Services that can be used to temporarily hire someone. Ms. Hiatt asked if there is someone else in the Town Hall that can be detailed to work in the Building Official's Office. Miss White said that it would be good to do some cross training. A brief discussion followed.

Ms. Hiatt stated that she thinks that if we have to close the Transfer Station one more day per week to have two more highway maintainers to do the work of the Town to ensure safety, she would push for that. Miss White stated that this sounds reasonable in the short term and that it would be reasonable to look at outsourcing some of these tasks. Mr. Groh stated that it would also be reasonable to pull one person from the Transfer Station and not closing the Transfer Station another day. A brief discussion followed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Telephone/Date Lines in Town Clerk's Office and Thompson Probate Court

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

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

- Ms. Hiatt stated that in budget deliberations there was a list of things the Board members wanted to do before the Board went into the budget season again. Ms. Hiatt asked the Board to bring those items to a Board meeting so that the Board can work on them before the budget season begins. Ms. Hiatt suggested adding this to the agenda of the next Selectmen's meeting.
- Ms. Hiatt requested that the Board be provided with quarterly reports on the Recreation Department's 950 revolving account.
- Miss White suggested that the Board compose a letter to the Librarian and the Trustees encouraging them to seek a way to make use of volunteers in carrying out the mission of the Library.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, that a letter from the Board under the hand of the First Selectman go to the Trustees and to the Librarian encouraging them to make use of volunteers to offset and be able to, hopefully, make a difference enough to have the Library open more often.

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

Discussion on Motion: Ms. Hiatt stated that she will vote no on the motion as it stands. Ms. Hiatt stated that a letter should go forward from the Board encouraging the Library to look at the use of volunteers but that she is not going to tell them that it is so they can extend the hours. Miss White said that it would be reasonable for the Board, on behalf of the citizens of the Town, to encourage them to make effort to extend the hours to at least the level they were at before.

- Ms. Hiatt asked Miss White how she was coming along with meeting with the residents on Little Pond in regard to finding out if any of the Town-owned properties could be clustered or sold. Miss White stated that she met with Mrs. Simmons today. Miss White also stated that she had asked if the Assessor would do an analysis so the Board could see what is the total land mass there and what is the total value.

-
- Ms. Hiatt stated that she spoke with the Assessor and that she had two companies in the RFP meeting and that she looks forward to getting the proposals in.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:45 p.m.

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

Recorded and transcribed by:
Tonya Levesque