



SELECTMEN'S MEETING

January 15, 2008

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 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; Lynn Landry; Al Landry; Elisa Myslivy; Donald Brown; Stephen Benoit; Joseph Donovan; Theodore Smith; George Elmes; Kathleen Murphy, Judge of Probate; Dustin Racciopi – Norwich Bulletin; Mason Wood – Thompson Villager; other concerned citizens

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2008 Special Selectmen's meeting as presented.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Governor Rell in regard to the State's criminal justice system.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence in regard to two outstanding invoices for the Resident State Trooper program.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Congressman Joe Courtney thanking the Town for participating in the LUCA program.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Day Pitney, LLP in regard to bonding for the School Building project and exemptions from paperwork required. The Board requested that the Finance Director attend the next Selectmen's meeting to explain the bonding process.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Connecticut State Police in regard to monthly calls for service.

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- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Office of Policy & Management in regard to STEAP grants. Mr. Groh stated that he spoke with the Director of Planning & Development in regard to the Town's eligibility for a STEAP grant.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Robinson & Cole in regard to the proposed cell tower on Marianapolis property.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Randolph Blackmer in regard to the purchase of the P&W railroad property and concerns about the use of the property as a trail. Miss White read the letter to the audience.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Connecticut Council of Small Towns in regard to leaders in Connecticut.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence in regard to a pending lawsuit. The Board requested that this item be placed on the next Selectmen's meeting agenda for an Executive Session.
 - Mr. Groh presented additional correspondence in regard to the proposed cell tower on Marianapolis property.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Northeast District Department of Health in regard to minutes from their last meeting.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Attorney General in regard to the Veterans tax exemption.
 - Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Paul LaFramboise in regard to residency requirements for students that attend the Thompson Public School system.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

- Mr. Groh commented that there was a Special Selectmen's meeting and a Special Board of Finance meeting for the purpose of purchasing a dump truck from the State of Connecticut for \$6,800.00. Mr. Groh added that time was of the essence in making the decision as the State of Connecticut had a one-week deadline for response. Mr. Groh commented that this truck will replace two trucks in the Public Works department. Miss White asked Mr. Groh to disclose the vote by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. Mr. Groh stated that there was a two to one vote by the Board of Selectmen in favor of the purchase and that there was one person on the Board of Finance who voted "no". A lengthy discussion followed. Ms. Hiatt asked if the Board was going to re-hash every vote and discussion made at every meeting and that the meeting in question was posted, the particulars were there and the Director of Public Works was available by cell phone. Ms. Hiatt stated that she had no problem raising the topic and answering citizens' questions, but that she has a problem when it becomes a political statement. Mr. Groh asked the audience to direct all questions/comments to him and that if anyone wanted anymore information he would be available to meet with them in his office.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

- Mr. Smith stated that the Highway Department did a lot better job during this past storm than they have in the past.
- Mr. Elmes inquired when the budget process would be started by the Board. Mr. Groh explained that budget sessions have already been scheduled on January 28, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., January 29, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. and February 4, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Elmes asked if this was the year the Town would see an increase to cover the School Building Project. A brief discussion followed.
- Mr. Smith asked if there would be a budget meeting on the final budget. The Board discussed reviewing the Board of Selectmen proposed budget at their regular scheduled meeting on February 19, 2008. The Board agreed to hold a Special Selectmen's meeting on February 26, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. for a final review and approval of the proposed FY2009 budget.
- Mr. Smith asked why the Board of Finance cuts the General Government budget even when the General Government budget passes.
- Mr. Smith asked how the Town is coming along on creating an ordinance regarding eminent domain. Mr. Groh explained that he intends to put a committee together to review all Town ordinances.
- Mr. Elmes suggested publicizing the meeting proposing the FY2009 budget in the Thompson Villager.
- Ms. Landry suggested that the publication of the proposed budget be a press release rather than a paid advertisement.

REQUEST FOR TRANSFER STATION USAGE – GIRL SCOUT TROOP 5559

The Board reviewed a request from Girl Scout Troop 5559 to use the Transfer Station to sell cookies on March 8, 2008 and March 15, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to allow the Girl Scouts to sell cookies at the Transfer Station for the two dates that they have stated here which is March 8th and March 15, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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

Discussion on Motion: Ms Hiatt requested that if the weather is ugly that the First Selectman or Public Works put a stop to the cookie sale for the safety of the Girl Scouts.

Mr. Smith suggested that the Town receive a waiver of liability from the Girl Scouts. Ms. Myslivy explained that all Girl Scouts are insured by the Girl Scouts of America and that she would forward proof of insurance to the Selectmen's Office.

REQUEST FOR TRANSFER STATION USAGE – BROWNIE TROOP 65421

The Board reviewed a request from Brownie Troop 65421 to use the Transfer Station to sell cookies on January 22, 2008.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to allow the Brownie Troop 65421 to sell cookies at the Transfer Station on January 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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

Discussion on Motion: Ms. Hiatt stated that her stipulation is the same in regard to inclement weather.

APPOINTMENT TO NORTHEAST DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH – KATHLEEN MURPHY

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to re-appoint Kathleen Murphy as the Thompson representative to the Northeast District Department of Health.

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

Discussion on Motion: A citizen questioned if there was a conflict as Ms. Murphy is also the Thompson Judge of Probate. Ms. Murphy explained that there was not a conflict. Miss White asked Ms. Murphy to explain her role on the Northeast District Department of Health. Mr. Elmes questioned issues in regard to secret meetings publicized in regard to the Thompson Hill Sewer project. A brief discussion followed in regard to the Thompson Hill Sewer project. Mr. Smith asked what NDDH does. A citizen asked what the per capita fee was. Mr. Groh stated that it is approximately \$3.00. Mr. Landry stated that all these questions were off point to the actual subject matter.

WILLIMANTIC REGIONAL CHILDREN'S PROBATE COURT

Mr. Groh explained that he received correspondence from the Thompson Judge of Probate in regard to the option of transferring children's matters to the Willimantic Regional Children's Probate Court. Kathleen Murphy, Judge Murphy gave a presentation in regard to the Thompson Probate Court and the Willimantic Regional Children's Probate Court. Judge Murphy stated that she believes that children's matters are heard expeditiously, cost effectively and in a confidential and professional matter here in the Thompson Probate Court. A brief discussion followed. The

Board agreed to support the Thompson Probate Court in keeping children's matters in Thompson. Mr. Groh presented a draft of a letter to Judge Murphy supporting her opinion on the Willimantic Regional Children's Probate Court.

Motion made by Miss White, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, that a separate letter be drafted from the Board that captures some of the pertinent points including Kathy's point.

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

Discussion on Motion: The Board agreed that the letter would be addressed to Judge Murphy and then sent to Judge Lawlor.

PRESENTATION ON REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER – DONALD BROWN

Mr. Brown gave a presentation on the proposed regional recreation center in Putnam. Mr. Brown stated that he has had difficulty getting any information on the project. Mr. Brown stated that he had a meeting with Day Kimball Hospital and a liaison from the Hale Group. Mr. Brown said that the liaison said that they did not want to use tax money to build the center. Mr. Brown reviewed the different models that were proposed including a YMCA model. Mr. Brown stated that this project is going to negatively affect local private businesses. Mr. Brown said that there is a steering committee but that he did not know what entity created the committee. Mr. Brown said that he would like someone from Thompson to try to figure out what is going on with this project.

Ms. Hiatt stated that she remembered an invitation that went out in regard to this facility and asked if anything has been presented at NECCOG. Mr. Groh said that John Filchak from NECCOG does not really know much about the project. A brief discussion followed.

No action taken.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BROCHURE

Miss White informed the Board that Town Counsel has not yet followed up with her in regard to asking the Town Manager in Putnam about any comments about their brochure. Miss White said that Town Counsel did approve the Thompson brochure.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that the First Selectman write a letter that can be used on the front of the map talking about Thompson, its unique qualities and tangentially what it has to offer for businesses based on what we have here.

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

MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION – 2007 FARM VIABILITY GRANTS

Mr. Groh presented information on the 2007 Farm Viability Grant that was awarded.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to sign the resolution on the 2007 Farm Viability Grant allowing the First Selectman as it's stated in here to deliver in the name of on behalf of the municipality a contract with the State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture for the Farm Viability Grant.

Ms. Hiatt	-Yes
Mr. Groh	-Yes
Miss White	-No

Discussion on Motion: Miss White expressed concern about granting fiduciary control to the Director of Planning & Development. Miss White suggested only the First Selectman or the First Selectman and the Finance Director. Mr. Groh stated that the Director of Planning & Development is the Town's grant writer and that it would be appropriate for him to be the First Selectman's designee. Miss White stated that she is very concerned about having a staff member and someone that does not have a vested interest or does not have a true fiduciary role in this capacity. Ms. White stated that she does not believe that they should be pushing down official acts to staff members. Ms. Hiatt asked if the Board has signed resolutions like this in the past. Ms. Levesque provided a resolution that was signed in March of 2007 stating that Carolyn Werge was the designee.

REVISION TO ALTERNATE LOCATIONS FOR SELECTMEN'S MEETINGS IN 2008

Mr. Groh informed the Board that another meeting location was scheduled at the Thompson Fire Engine Company on March 4, 2008.

TAX REFUND (1)

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

-George Grauer	-\$43.42
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<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

OTHER BUSINESS

- Miss White commented that the Thompson Business Directory has over 50 businesses. Miss White stated that the next Economic Development Commission meeting is tomorrow night in the Merrill Seney Community Room at 7:00 p.m.

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- Miss White asked what the policy is surrounding grants. Miss White asked to see a presentation on grant strategy including how the Town applies for them, what the Town does when one is received. Mr. Groh stated that he asked the Director of Planning & Development for a listing of the current grants he is working on. Ms. Hiatt added that the Department Heads also inform the Director of Planning & Development when they see an available grant pertaining to their departmental needs. A brief discussion followed.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:54 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