



TOWN of THOMPSON
Board of Selectmen- Minutes
Tuesday, February 15, 2022
Town Hall-Merrill Seney Room
and via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal

- I. The call to order by First Selectman Amy St Onge was at 7:00 PM with all Selectmen present. Roll call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Ken Beausoleil, and Susanne Witkowski. HR Director Michelle Giammarinaro, Many Members of Fire Departments, Boards and Commissions as well the public, WINY, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst
- II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited
- III. Approval of Minutes:
Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to approve the minutes of the 02-1-2022 BOS Meeting carried unanimously
Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the minutes of the 02-07-2022 BOS Special Budget Meeting carried unanimously
Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to approve the minutes of the 02-09-2022 BOS Special Budget Meeting carried unanimously

IV. Correspondence

A. TEC Associates Vegetation Management Plan-P&W Railroad beginning 05-2022

B. Chamber of Commerce Business after Hours- February 23- Hope Lodge, Moosup

****After the agenda was posted- resignation memo from the Director of the DPW**

Motion S. Witkowski seconded by A. St Onge to add an agenda item under #XIII Other: Discussion of the resignation of the Director of the Department of Public Works carried unanimously.

V. Selectmen Comments:

- K. Beausoleil noted the budget building process for the next fiscal year is underway.

* The DPW has been challenged by frequent if not major snowfalls. A. St Onge noted that the BOF has received a statement from the DPW Director indicating a possible shortfall of road salt. Each road treatment uses about 100 tons, and only 3 tons remain, with another month of winter before us. The price this year has escalated about 33%.

- S. Witkowski: none at this time

- A. St Onge: The search for an interim Finance Director did not have a successful result. However, a referral has led to the hiring, on a temporary basis, of a person well-qualified to work with the town through the budget season; she noted his experience and credentials. He begins work this Thursday; he has no interest in a permanent position.

VI. Citizens' Comments:

-Sally White, 308 E. Thompson Rd: * inquired about the absence of the State Police report (A. St Onge: customarily it appears on the agenda of the first BOS meeting of the month).

* Discussion of voting Districts- asked about a possible canvas of voters in East Thompson, noting some difficulties at the Fire Station as a voting place recently. *Suggested a brainstorming of voting place possibilities. * regarding agenda #XI: she asked for details

VII. Planning & Zoning Commission – The PZC approved the Donovan Drive construction proposal, 01-24-2022, with stipulations. It transfers an open-space 19-acre parcel along the Quinebaug River to the town. K. Beausoleil noted that the work is underway, the town is protected by the stipulations enacted by the PZC, and that the Director of Public Works has weighed in favorably on the project.

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to accept Donovan Drive Road as a town road, the developer to abide by the stipulations put in place by the Planning and Zoning Commission, carried unanimously.

VIII..EDC Branding Subcommittee being disbanded; Chair Renee Waldron so informed the BOS in a memo 03-03-2022, speaking for the Branding Subcommittee. The BOS thanked the members of the Subcommittee. Their mission is completed; they were praised for an outstanding job.

IX. Voting Districts -Proposed Ordinance Discussion: Elections Monitor Doug Lary reminds the BOS that the state-mandated redistricting must be completed by March 22. The current voting District 3 (Quinebaug area) is impacted, and those voters will participate in elections of the candidates for Senate District 35. The Ordinance regarding voting districts is under review. It has been confirmed that at the Town meeting to enact the new Ordinance, voters are to be presented with one option regarding any matter. Thus, the question about redistricting to accommodate the new state mandate will be one question. Simultaneous to changes for the 35th Senate District, the BOS evaluated options for changing the voting places for the other Districts. A second question can be offered to the voters, who can determine if the other voting districts should be combined, and how. Again, one proposal must be put to the voters. If that should be defeated, an optional proposal can be at hand and ready to discuss. The BOS weighed bringing the total voting places down to 2 and alternatively, down to 3. The Town Meeting target date is March 16, pending a proposed revision of the Ordinance.

Due to a technology glitch, the meeting was halted at around 38 Minutes and resumed at around 50 minutes. After continued discussion:

Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by A. St Onge to schedule a Town Meeting on March 16 to vote on re-districting, as recommended by the Election Monitor.

Question 1: The mandatory re-districting of the current voting district 3, Quinebaug area, to comply with new Senate District 35 boundaries.

Question 2: The voting districts of Thompson, CT shall be re-drawn, with current voting districts 1 and 2 combined. Motion carried unanimously.

X. Ambulance Update: The process is working smoothly, with a target completion date of May 1. Putnam EMS has looked at the 3 Thompson ambulances, to determine the financial value of each; this value will off-set the out-of-pocket costs for the initial period of time that Thompson and Putnam Ambulance are working together. There was discussion of the Speedway Ice Breaker coming up soon; the assumption is that since K-B is providing services to Thompson, they will be contracted. Responding to an inquiry in the "chat box" on Zoom, A. St Onge added that the proposed contract is for 5 years, with an exit clause if 6 months' notice is presented.

XI. Combined Finance Director (Town and School): The presentation by HR Director Michelle Giammarinaro at the 02-03 Tri-Board meeting was thorough, reviewing which other communities which use a combined position, and subsequent questions have been addressed. The Zoom recoding of the meeting is attached to the Minutes, posted on the Town Website. The reporting structure was confirmed: the Finance Director will work primarily in the town hall and will report to the First Selectman, in part because the individual will also serve as Town Treasurer. K. Beausoleil voiced concerns: the number of hours required to meet demands at certain peak times of the month/year would be a strain, and School Finance has so many specific reports due to the State. M. Giammarinaro added: combining these positions will eliminate duplicated work and eliminate errors, providing increased accountability; the combination of IT services and of HR services have both worked out well for the town. A. St Onge: by combining the two budgets, a more highly-credentialled individual can be sought. **Motion S. Witkowski seconded by A. St Onge to move forward with combining the Town and School Finance director's positions carried. K. Beausoleil voted "nay" based on the two concerns he expressed.**

XII. Re-appointments:

Note was made that both Phil Thomas and Norma O'Leary have been reappointed by the Conservation Commission through 03-15-2027. The excellence and time spans of their work was commented upon.

XIII. Other Business: Memo of resignation Richard Benoit, Director of Public Works, effective March 3. It was noted that Rich has been a great asset to the town, helpful and supportive in several ways.

Motion S. Witkowski seconded by K. Beausoleil to accept Richard Benoit's resignation with deep regret carried unanimously.

XIV. Citizens' Comments:

-Sally White, 308 E. Thompson Rd-confirmed the controls for a combined Finance Director's position. A. St Onge reviewed those currently in place, which will remain.

- Kathleen Herbert, 122 Wilsonville Rd cited some additional benefits to the town and some other controls which the Schools have in place, including mandatory audits. The individual will have the Big Picture view of the entire town's finances. Greater transparency will result: all info in one place, the responsibility of one person.

XV. Tax Refunds:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to approve the tax refunds for a total of \$254,48 carried unanimously.

Fort Hill Farms, LLC \$199.72

Livingstone, Jayson A.

\$54.76

XVI. Executive Session:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to go into Executive Session at 8:21 PM to discuss a possible Lien Release/ Windham North Properties. After consideration, the motion was rescinded.

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to go into Executive Session at 8:23 PM with all 3 Selectmen present as well as with the town Attorney via telephone to discuss a possible Lien Release/ Windham North Properties carried unanimously.

Executive Session ended at 8:56 PM. As a result of Executive Session, the following action was taken:

Motion by A St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil: The Board of Selectmen Authorize the Town Attorney to prepare and execute a release of the lien for 2 parcels of land located at 0 Riverside Drive (152 and 49 acres) in the amount of \$384,000 in exchange for the deposit of \$384,000 in a passbook account in favor of the Town of Thompson to be released to the Town of Thompson if the North Grosvenordale Pond Dam repairs are not completed under the terms negotiated by the Town Attorney and approved by the First Selectman. Motion carried unanimously.

XVII. Adjourn:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to adjourn at 8:57 PM carried unanimously.

To see the meeting, click on this link or copy/paste into your search bar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/gN0eOM3CN8HxZ5276motki_3L4N9tu1qPgtwEel2sFcPYpdmJeATHapxGtzS5tPe.yrUxUtuxqCa_fqDI **Passcode: M%sN0ig&**

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.