



**Town of THOMPSON
Board of Selectmen-Minutes
Tuesday, January 4, 2022
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 via Zoom. Roll call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Ken Beausoleil, and Susanne Witkowski. Emergency Management Director Steve Benoit, HR Director Michelle Giammarinaro, Many Members of Boards and Commissions as well the public via Zoom, WINY, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

II. In the absence of an American flag at the various Selectmen's locations, the Pledge of Allegiance was not recited. A moment of silence was conducted in memory of Josh Kusek.

III. Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the minutes of the 12-21-2021 BOS Meeting carried unanimously, correcting the spelling of the name of Crystal Simon.

IV. Correspondence: 12/29 memo from Planning and Zoning identifying appointments made 12/27 to fill vacancies: Alvin Hill through 11-18-2025 and Dave Poplawski through 11-21-2023. They request that these newly-vacated seats be filled by the BOS.

V. Selectmen Comments:

- K. Beausoleil: asked the status of the Public Services structure/possible land acquisition
- S. Witkowski: noted the passing of Josh Kusek, who will be very missed; a GoFundMe page was opened to address the future needs of his young child
- A. St Onge: Covid test kits for residents were distributed at the Riverside Park gazebo. The needs of the Housing Authority and home-bound Seniors/other vulnerable members of the population will be addressed by the Emergency Services Director, Steve Benoit

VI. Citizens' Comments:

- Sally White, 308 E. Thompson Rd: concerning the state's redistricting that has changed Senate Districts for some Thompson residents, calls for open debate about possible changes to be made in polling places and the potential impacts thereof.
- Steve Benoit, Emergency Management Director: Covid test kits are available; he will made certain that some are directed to the town's senior/vulnerable population

VII. Ambulance Service Update by A. St Onge: Attorney Ed Higgins, Chair of Putnam Ambulance, has been sent a proposed budget. While showing respect for the passing of John Kusek, there may be a brief pause in moving forward with this matter. She called for a preliminary meeting (a BOS Special Meeting) with the newly-expanded group of community participants, including the individual who sits on the BOF (Rob Werge), volunteer Justin Yong, and the Fire Marshal (Jamie Seney) in order to establish goals and determine the thinking of the members, before the Putnam ad hoc committee meets.

VIII. Resignation - Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Finance Director: a 12-22-2021 memo of resignation offered to provide transition assistance to the town until February 2.
Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to accept the resignation of Orla McKiernan-Raftery as Finance Director and Treasurer with regret carried unanimously.

IX. Finance Director - Discussion and Possible Action: A. St Onge noted that the HR Director, Michelle, Giammarinaro, and she have had a preliminary meeting. The contract for the Schools Finance Director Bob Gentes expires in June; there may be interest in combining

the overlapping Town/Schools functions, thereby eliminating duplicated staffing. In a preliminary meeting, BOF Chair Aaron McGarry has noted that the person hired as Finance Director must be clear about the reporting procedure, directing that person to the appropriate elected town officer. The HD Director will move ahead to speak with the 5 other Connecticut towns that have a shared Town and Schools Finance Director, looking for how the responsibilities are split and feedback about glitches. S. Witkowski called for a Tri-Board meeting (BOS, BOF, and BOE) to review the preliminary findings. K. Beausoleil concurred, noting that budget-building season is soon here, and a tri-board meeting roundtable discussion would be of benefit in that regard as well. A. St Onge: the town has reached out to seek a consultant to assist with the process. K. Beausoleil: the subject of the vacant position of Town Treasurer must be addressed. He confirmed Orla Kiernan-Raferly's participation in the budget-building process, possibly after hours.

X. Other Business: none

XI. Citizens' Comments:

- Sally White, 308 E Thompson Rd: encourages that possible regrets within the 5 towns that currently have shared Finance Directors (Town and Schools) be requested.
- Kim Austin, 61 Quaddick Town Farm Rd: thanked Orla Kiernan-Raferly for her dedication and years of hard work for the town.

XII. Tax Refunds:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to refund taxes as presented (ACAR Leasing \$308.50 and \$292.39) carried unanimously.

XIII. Adjourn:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to adjourn at 7:34 PM carried unanimously.

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

The ZOOM (video) recording of this meeting is not available.
The audio recording is available in the Selectman's Office.

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.