



TOWN OF
THOMPSON
Board of Selectmen

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday, January 5, 2021

Via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal

Minutes

First Selectman Amy St Onge called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with all three Selectmen present via Zoom. A. St Onge noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Roll call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Susanne Witkowski and Ken Beausoleil. John Rice (PZC, Building Committee), Tyra Penn-Gesek (Town Planner), Members of Boards/Commissions, and of the public, WINY, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

I. Approval of Minutes:

Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the 12-15-2020 BOS Regular Meeting Minutes with a modification carried unanimously. Two sentences in Selectmen's Comments (Item III) are to be re-sequenced, then reading
- *S. Witkowski* * *There have been serious accidents near the MA border where the re-paving was done. A. St Onge agrees. The DOT will be contacted. * Grand Opening of the new in-town dog kennel? Probably in the spring. K. Beausoleil suggests a video walk-through now, as well as use of WINY and facebook.*

II. Correspondence:

*Registrars of Voters - District 1 Polling Location: the 12-30-2020 memo to the Town Clerk from the Registrars of Voters was read into the record by A. St Onge. As the BOS does not find a suitable polling place within the District, now that the Fire Station can no longer serve in that capacity, the polling place is moved to the Library's Louis P. Faucher Community Room of the for the District 1 voters. The BOS noted that by Statute, the legal notice must be published within 10 days, and therefore the Norwich Bulletin will be used.
*Additional correspondence subsequent to the posting of the agenda:
-Karen Durlach, Trails Chair, notes that the Committee may request a trailer for use at the sites, registered to the town and similarly insured. The BOS members agreed to attend the Trails Committee next meeting in order to learn more.
- Jessica Bolte, representing the Girl Scouts, sent a memo regarding a proposed event in March; it will appear on the next BOS Agenda, January 19.

III. Selectmen Comments:

K. Beausoleil- none

S. Witkowski- road conditions both north- and south-bound on I 395 just south of the Mass border here in Thompson have resulted in another set of accident scenes, one involving 5 vehicles.
A. St Onge- a formal "Notice of Commitment to Fund" of the Sidewalk upgrade program, in the amount of \$2.1 Million, has been received. * The CT DEEP met with town officials, and an engineer representing the owner, Centerville Bank, regarding safety concerns at the N. Grosvenordale pond dam. A report will be forwarded to the BOS. * RFPs have gone out for the Buckley Hill Road design work and soon the RFP for <20' Bridge Safety Inspections can go out.
* The Town Planner has begun work on a BRIC grant from FEMA for Langer Pond.

* We in Thompson regret the loss of Chief Randy Daggett and of Deputy Chief Patrick Dragon; these two men were great members of the community.

IV. Citizen Comments:

J. Rice, East Thompson Rd- additionally the town recently lost Al Smat, a long-time teacher who will be missed by the community

V. Resignation:

Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to accept the resignation of Barbara Roach from the Inland Wetlands Commission with regret carried unanimously.

VI. Appointment (per the recommendation of the Agriculture Commission):

Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to appoint Vernon Butler as an alternate to the Agriculture Commission (through 08-01-2024) carried unanimously.

VII. Affordable Housing Plan RFP - Discussion and Possible Action: Planner T. Penn-Gesek reviewed the sequence of steps leading toward implementation of the \$15,000 grant for Affordable Housing, which expires in June this year; among them was the wait for the State to issue their Affordable Housing Guidebook, which has now arrived. The RFP has been prepared awaiting authorization to release it, A. St Onge stated a copy was received in the BOS office and will be forwarded to the BOS. A working group with representatives from various volunteer Boards/Commissions, as well as with Housing Authority leadership, will be formed; S. Witkowski volunteered to serve. She stated that ideally, the BOS members would have seen the draft previous to this meeting. Any motion will be for approval of the process, not the precise language. K. Beausoleil confirmed that other Connecticut towns' applications served as a model for ours. **Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by A. St Onge to authorize the Town Planner to issue a RFP seeking a consultant in order to implement an Affordable Housing Grant carried unanimously.**

VIII. Legal Notice of Town Meeting - Discussion and Possible Action:

Update by A. St Onge-

- The Schools Roofs project will have to go to a town meeting and referendum again due to the timing of the Official Warning.
- The Town Attorney has done work on the 2 Ordinances under discussion:
 - 1). Elimination of the bifurcated (split) budgets so they can be combined into one vote.
 - 2). Modification of the timeline needed to post a legal notice for referenda to not fewer than 21 days from the date of it appearing in print to the town meeting, rather than the State timeline of 30 days; Statute permits a town to so modify the process by Ordinance.

K. Beausoleil- because of the Covid spikes, this may not be an ideal time to make changes, even though they are the right things to do.

S. Witkowski- on the other hand, Zoom worked nicely, we conducted a successful hybrid Town Meeting; attendance was great and many residents were involved. Towns' people should see this proposed budgetary format change as a way to save tax dollars in the long run.

A. St Onge asked J. Rice, Building Committee Chair, about the timing of the Roofs project, for which a bid has already been awarded. He noted that preliminary work can begin when students are not in school, such as if they are all doing remote learning from home. March is a likely start date. A. St Onge- tentatively then a legal notice for a Town Meeting the first week of February followed by a referendum the first week of March could work out. S. Witkowski- ideally the subject of tax abatements/exemptions for Fire Safety personnel will be ready to be voted on at the same time. In order to move into the budget preparation time period, a solid number in this category will be needed. No action was taken.

IX. Adoption of The Plan of Conservation & Development (PoCD) - Discussion and Possible Action:
Update by Planner T. Penn-Gesek:

- * a final draft of the PoCD, developed by 30 hard-working people, is now available.
- * 65 days from the date the document is received by NEECOG, a Public Hearing will be held.
- * Comments may come in now: from the BOS by 01-19 and by 01-25 from the PZC. Any comments will then be integrated into the text.
- * The PoCD will then be posted for public review; on 01-29 the draft will be considered complete and the public hearing will be scheduled for 03-04.
- * The PZC can then vote to adopt.
- * This timeline is a little behind schedule; State grant applications can be affected if it is late.

S. Witkowski- applauds the huge effort. She confirms that the BOS is required to give approval, but that the PZC is the body which officially enacts the document.

A. St Onge asks that after Attorney Richard Roberts reviews the document, that his comments be shared with the BOS.

J. Rice noted that the public has to be informed, and asked that the document be posted on the town website in addition to the 2 newspaper notices, so the public can submit comments.

No action was taken.

X. Land Donation to Windham Trust - Discussion and Possible Action:

The December 30, 2020 Memo from Carolyn Werge, Conservation Officer, discussing options put forward by the PZC regarding Bull Hill lots owned by the Town was referenced in discussing possible uses of the an adjacent lots. The PZC recommended that 6 lots be made available by the town to transfer to the Windham Land Trust. One additional lot which was originally proposed was not put forward due to concerns with woodlands and possible community uses for it, which should be explored, per the text in the will of the Ravenelle family. S. Witkowski asked that the BOS understand the possible uses for Recreation of any land which is considered for swapping with the Land Trust; the Soccer Fields on Bull Hill are on land not very suitable for that use, and other parcels may or may not be more ideal. The consensus of the BOS was to enter into a conversation with the Land Trust and other interested parties, to explore the possibilities.

XI. Other Business: none

XII. Citizens Comments: none

XIII. Tax Refunds:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to approve tax refunds totaling \$396.08 carried unanimously.

ACAR Leasing LTD \$337.06 - Mailloux, Reid M. \$49.18 - Lovett, JoAnn \$9.84

XIV. Adjourn:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to adjourn at 8:13 PM carried unanimously.

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

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/xhoHB_y4G7ZMuOED5CmKHwYJ297G-b3nIYI7VMW74E8NgFEIqcECp5BH6f8JgR4q.W3rVBK7msjEf20w

Passcode: c7Fr!%ZZ

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.