



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Board of Selectmen-Minutes

Tuesday, September 21, 2021
Hybrid Meeting – In Person at Town Hall
and via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal

- I. Call To Order:
The call to order by First Selectman Amy St Onge was at 7:00 PM; all Selectmen were present.
Roll call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Susanne Witkowski and Ken Beausoleil.
Members of the public and Fire Departments in person via Zoom, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- II. Approval of Minutes:
Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the 08-03-2021 BOS meeting minutes carried unanimously.
Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the 09-7-2021 BOS meeting minutes carried unanimously.
- III. Correspondence:
 - A. Chamber of Commerce – Business After Hour: Black Dog Grill, 09-22 , 5-7
 - B. TVCCA Thank You Letter/Senior Nutrition Program donation for 2021-2022
 - C. Chamber of Commerce Business Showcase Wed 10-26, Willimantic, 5-8
- IV. Selectmen Comments:
 - K. Beausoleil: Looking forward to Community Day, October 2
 - S. Witkowski: Commends the First Selectman for quick response to the EMS situation
 - A. St Onge: Hoping for the traditional sunny day for Community Day (10-02) * With the budget allocation of \$21K, the site plan at the DPW is being developed by J&D Engineering for a future Public Safety Complex and updated Salt Storage facility; the space available is being assessed.
- V. Citizen Comments:
 - Diane Jamieson, 490 Sunset Hill Rd: asks that fire and ambulance services are continued
 - Paul Lenkey, Watson Rd: noted the status of roadside mowing, stating that the Eversource 3-year contract requires mowing on both sides of telephone poles. * Asked about the weight restriction on Buckley Hill Rd (A. St Onge: DOT deemed it unsafe; the cause for the designation is under review). * asked about the sale of property on Wilsonville Rd/RT 12 (A. St Onge- PZC so advised; it was sold to an abutter)
- VI. Resignations:
Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to accept the resignation of Recording Secretary Audrey Witkowski, of Library Circulation Supervisor Sara Menard (effective Saturday, 09-25), and of Purely Recreation program staff member Chris McClure (effective 09-13), all with regret, carried unanimously.
- VII. Project Graduation: Request for “Fill The Paw” fundraiser at Transfer Station:
Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the Project Graduation request as presented for a fundraiser at the Transfer Station Main on Oct. 9, 2021 8-3 (Rain Date 10-16) carried unanimously.
- VIII. Transfer Station Scale Fee – Discussion and Possible Action: K. Beausoleil was present at the Transfer Station Advisory Committee meeting where various points in the proposal were clarified. DPW staff confirmed that an occasional resident who has a Permit asks to have a vehicle weighed. The proposed increases (Bulky waste and tires) are to cover the town’s higher disposal costs. Credit card payments simplify and speed up transactions at the Transfer Station, with a \$10 minimum charge, and should be encouraged. A. St Onge- the town must do what it can to keep the Transfer Station viable without increasing the overall permit fee to residents.

Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to authorize the Transfer Station fee schedule changes as presented, except that the vehicle scale will be available to permit holders at no additional charge, and that credit card payments for fees be accepted with a minimum charge of \$10, carried unanimously.

- IX. Letter from Janet Blanchette 09-11-2021 re: ARPA Funds: A. St Onge praised Janet Blanchette's forward-looking idea- the possibility of utilizing some ARPA funds to leverage a LOTCIP Grant(Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program) to allow upgrades to Main Street including the sidewalks, such as was previously used for Riverside Drive (\$2.1M grant). K. Beausoleil-get the preliminary work done soon and be ready to do the work when spring arrives. A. St Onge-and also keep it in mind for the next budget cycle to qualify for additional grants.

- X. Ambulance Services – Discussion and Possible Action: A. St Onge- state law requires ambulance service by each town. She reviewed the events beginning 09-09 when EMT resignations started arriving, and the steps taken to provide ambulance service since, guided by the OEMS. K-B Ambulance has the staff and equipment and has provided temporary service. Today, Chief Sharpe presented a proposal that Community Fire Company relinquish all physical EMS assets (vehicles, equipment, and remaining supplies) to the town, contingent upon the town funding a request for \$158,688 (Station 81 repairs (\$122,500), an ambulance loan payoff (\$27,150), and a Power Load System loan payoff (\$9,016). Continued funding of Community Fire Station would be at the same annual level as the other fire departments, and insurance coverage would continue to be maintained.

A. St Onge stated that she finds the proposal amicable, assuming that all equipment will pass OEMS inspection. Then town can consider combining ambulance services with Putnam EMS. Guidance indicates that a merger with Putnam Ambulance/EMS could be active in about a month. Attorney Ed Higgins, Putnam EMS Board Chair relayed that Putnam contributes \$75-80K annually to the service, indicating that the current Thompson budget allocation is in the ballpark. A. St Onge read her prepared statement: the focus now is to get ambulance services back up and running, and even stronger. She recommends an agreement among all Thompson fire departments with full details about working together as needed to help build an even more professional and in combination, a stronger service. Regionalization IS going to be the way how EMS is structured moving forward in the region.

K. Beausoleil- reviewed the current K-B arrangement at \$1,440/day.

K. Beausoleil-all current mutual aid arrangements with adjoining towns will remain in effect.

S. Witkowski: four Stations already have R1 status (Emergency Responder) and Community is pursuing it now (did not need it when the ambulance service was part of the operation).

S. Witkowski: confirmed that the current budget will carry the temporary K-B Ambulance service for enough time to work out the next step.

K. Beausoleil- the Hill Station will need expenses covered for allowing an ambulance to be housed and serviced there. A. St Onge: perhaps a 2-year rental agreement can facilitate this.

K. Beausoleil: has many questions, the primary one being "does the town actually want to be in the ambulance service business?" A. St Onge: a DBA with a manager would be established.

A. St Onge: will follow-up on R1 status for Community Fire. After extended discussion:

Motion S. Witkowski seconded by A. St Onge to authorize the First Selectman to meet with Community Fire Station leadership to pursue their 09-21-2021 proposal which offers the sale of three ambulances and equipment through the town's use of not-yet-designated ARPA funds, with the goal of the meeting to develop an agreement within two weeks, carried unanimously.

XI. Other Business: none

XII. Citizens' Comments:

-Steve Benoit, Fuller DR: the ambulances have been paid for through the taxes/annual budgets.
 -Larry Groh, 183 Wagher Rd: asked again about the sale of a piece of property on Riverside Dr.
 A. St Onge- the PZC reviewed the matter, sending authorization to the BOS, which voted to sell the property to the low bidder, an abutter. The attorney advised that no town meeting was needed.
 -Matt Whipple, 113 Riverside Dr: a 24-hour operation ambulance service, town-owned and run, is a good idea. This will draw those trained in EMS skills to reside in Thompson.
 - Brian Erickson, 39 Greenacres Lane: endorsed the plan to take ambulances in exchange for ARPA funds, which help meet the Community Fire Station's needs

XIII. Tax Refunds:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the Tax refunds in the amount of \$947.37 carried unanimously.

A J Manufacturing LLC	\$35.76	Tupaj, Randall J.	\$9.08
Flynn, Leon E.	\$21.76	Vincent, Robert A.	\$120.91
Harris, Priscilla W.	\$15.62	Sponcey, Beatrice/Omer	\$27.96
Houle, Virginia L.	\$8.95	Nash, Constance A. and	
Johnson, Christopher B.	\$30.04	Wallen, Glen G.	\$666.91
Kosiba, Ronald F.	\$10.38		

XIV. Adjourn:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to adjourn at 8:09 PM carried unanimously.

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/GLdUkeoxc3Zv7ObV-cAD8es3jCdR-MVq52rpGJGSm2FIbUwWwIb3cLRBrz9OZrxi.RYojYXNW4VwhWyju> Passcode: w\$YCqa54

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.