



SELECTMEN'S MEETING

September 6, 2011

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, September 6, 2011, at 7:30 p.m. in the Merrill Seney Community Room.

PRESENT: Lawrence K. Groh, Jr., First Selectman; John Bell, Selectman; Kenneth Beausoleil, Selectman; Kerensa Konesni – WINY Radio; Joseph Gaucher; Kevin Walsh; Steven Bodreau; Steve Benoit; Kerstin Forrester; Paul Baer; Al Landry; other concerned citizens

ADDITION TO AGENDA

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mr. Bell, to add Proclamation Concerning September 11 to the Agenda as Item 8.a).

<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting of August 16, 2011.

<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Groh presented correspondence concerning Passport Day, September 17, 2011.

Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Department of Transportation considering replacing LED streetlights at the intersections of Routes 12/193, Routes 131/197 and Route 131 with Fabyan/Watson Roads. This will be funded 80% by the Federal Government and 20% through the State.

Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the Director of the Library stating that on August 28, 2011, one window had been shot with a pellet gun and that, over the past weekend, nine more windows were shot out. The vandalism is escalating and the State Police have been notified. There was a discussion of the need for security cameras and budget considerations.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Groh hoped that all citizens enjoyed a safe Labor Day weekend.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Gaucher stated that the TWPCA will hold a Public Hearing concerning a proposed rate increase on September 7, 2011, 7 p.m. at the TWPCA Facility, Riverside Drive. Mr. Gaucher commented that this hearing has not been heavily advertised and felt that the rate increase is unnecessary.

Mr. Baer asked if there was any way to reprogram funding for security cameras at the Library/Community Center. Mr. Groh replied that the procedure is to take any request from the Board of Selectmen to the Board of Finance. He gave a brief history of how this expenditure was proposed and later removed from the current budget. This matter will be researched and put on the agenda for the next Selectmen's Meeting, which occurs two days before the next Board of Finance meeting.

HURRICANE IRENE

Mr. Groh explained the Emergency Management Form that citizens with special electrical or medical needs may fill out. An updated list of citizens with these needs is maintained by Emergency Management Coordinator Steve Benoit. This form is available at the Town Hall and through the five Fire Departments. There was a discussion of other avenues of distributing this form.

Mr. Groh updated citizens concerning the response and actions of the Town during this storm. Mr. Groh and Mr. Benoit opened the Emergency Operations Center on Saturday, August 27, 2011 at 4 p.m. The Quinebaug Fire Station opened their shelter at 6 p.m. on that day. During the storm thirty-one roads were closed because of downed power lines, the Highway Crew cleared twelve additional roads and 73% of the town was without power. CL&P began working on Monday, August 29, 2011 at 7:30 a.m. One two-man crew worked with the Highway Crew to open roads on Monday and Tuesday, accomplishing this task in fifteen locations. This crew was expected to return on Wednesday, August 31, 2011, but didn't return to Thompson.

Mr. Groh attended a meeting at NECCOG on Thursday, September 1, 2011. This meeting was with the CEO of CL&P, Senator Williams, Representative Rovero and other legislators, representatives of the Board of Health, Emergency Management and Red Cross, as well as area First Selectmen and Mayors. At this meeting, Mr. Groh expressed his displeasure with the inadequate response of CL&P. By 2 p.m. that day, there were eight two-man CL&P crews in Thompson. On Friday, September 2, 2011, all roads were passable and 50% of the residences had power.

On Saturday, September 3, 2011, the Red Cross distributed 160 MREs (Meals Ready to Eat), bottled water and other supplies at the Town Hall. Volunteers distributed home-baked goods for 200 people.

On Sunday, eight crews were in town and there were 400 homes without power. On Monday, the number of homes without power dropped to fifteen, and one residence was without power at the end of Monday. Power was restored to that residence at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 6, 2011.

Mr. Groh has been in direct contact with CL&P to monitor the progress of power restoration. There are continuing problems with weakened tree limbs that are falling on power lines. Mr. Groh expressed his appreciation to all of the volunteers who put in countless hours during this time: the Fire Departments; Steve Benoit as Emergency Management Coordinator, and Al LaFleur and Bill Poirier, who helped man the Emergency Operations Center; and the Highway Crew, who used every cone and roadblock in stock.

Mr. Benoit stated that the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) began Saturday at 4 p.m. and closed on Sunday at 8 p.m., fielding 137 calls by radio, hi-band, ham radio, e-mail, and telephone. There was cooperation between the Fire Departments, and the additional MREs will be stored at each department. He thanked Mr. Groh for working with CL&P to restore power to our citizens. He stated that the Emergency Management Form is confidential; however, this information provides vital information for planning. He stated that that Department of Public Works provided a “fantastic response”. There will be a meeting with the five Chiefs, the First Selectman and Mr. Benoit to assess the actions and response. Communication was key to this successful response. Mr. Benoit expressed his appreciation for everyone’s efforts and stated that Mr. Groh brought the Town together in responding to this emergency.

Mr. Groh commented that many people lost food because of the loss of access to proper refrigeration and freezing. MREs are also available at the Town Hall, in the Selectman’s Office. Mr. Beausoleil stated that the response began on Friday evening, August 26, 2011, with a meeting of the Fire Chiefs and Mr. Benoit. EOC set up communications well. There was a lot of frustration in getting the CL&P crews here as well as inaccurate information from CL&P. Mr. Bell thanked WINY Radio for providing up to date information for the community. He also thanked Mr. Groh, Mr. Benoit, the Fire Departments and the many private citizens who shared with their neighbors.

Ms. Forrester asked for information on CL&P’s policy on tree trimming. Mr. Groh stated that this has been discussed during the September 1, 2011 Regional Meeting. There was a discussion of the statewide response by CL&P and the inadequacy of the communication and initial manpower available. Many towns had problems with this lack of communication.

Mr. Landry thanked the Thompson Public Library/Community Center for providing cell phone and lap-top charging, and Mr. Groh for his efforts with obtaining response from CL&P. Mr. Walsh requested that a thorough investigation take place concerning the CL&P response. Mr. Groh stated that all of the First Selectmen and Mayors in our region will meet with CL&P within the next few weeks, but could not comment on the State or Federal plans. Ms. Konesni stated that Senator Williams has issued a press release stating the General Assembly will hold a meeting within two weeks with CL&P to address their response times and lack of communication with local officials.

Mr. Baer commented that CL&P has gambled with the lives and public health of area residents by downsizing their crews, and should be ashamed of their response. Mr. Groh thanked WINY Radio for providing information to all of our citizens.

YEAR – END BUDGET TRANSFERS

Mr. Groh presented the recommendations of Finance Director Michael Martin regarding year-end budget transfers totaling \$156,200.

Motion made by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to approve the increased and decreased line items totaling \$156,200 as recommended by Finance Director Michael Martin, and to present this to the Board of Finance.

<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

APPROVAL OF NOTICE OF TOWN MEETING

Mr. Beausoleil read the Call to Town Meeting into the record. This meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 7 p.m., at the Thompson Public Library/Community Center. The items are to choose a moderator, to act upon Ordinances 11-002 Farm Buildings, 11-003 Farm Machinery, 10-019 Annual Fireman's Tax Abatement, 10-025 Declaration of Disaster Emergency, 10-033 Review of Ordinances every Ten Years, 10-039 Recreation Commission, 10-048 Additional Veteran's Tax Exemption, and a resolution to lease Town land at 1017 Riverside Drive.

Motion made by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to accept the Notice of Town Meeting for September 14, 2011, as read.

<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Discussion on Motion: Copies are available on the website and from the Town Clerk or First Selectman. There was a discussion of the Firemen's Abatement and the applicable State Statutes. Mr. Groh distributed copies of the proposed lease to the Board.

PROCLAMATION FOR LEUKEMIA & LYMPHONA SOCIETY

Mr. Beausoleil read the proposed proclamation into the record.

Motion made by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to accept and sign the Leukemia and Lymphona Society Proclamation as read, declaring September 2011 as Awareness Month.

<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

PROCLAMATION CONCERNING SEPTEMBER 11

Mr. Bell read into the record a proclamation regarding the observance of September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

Motion made by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to accept and sign the Proclamation as read.

<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

TAX REFUNDS

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to refund the following overpayments as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.

Herbert Corttis	\$ 5.73
Bernard Graham	\$ 5.86
Leo LaFlamme	\$ 9.84
Mary LaFontaine	\$ 3.74
Susan LeBeau	\$ 7.27
Peter Lopriore	\$ 5.09
Patrick Maher	\$10.15
Jonathan Rider	\$19.64
David Ruoppo	\$16.54
Toyota Motor Credit Corp.	\$34.63
Francis and Darlene Tremont	\$20.72

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

EXECUTIVE SESSION – POSSIBLE LAND TRANSFER EXECUTIVE SESSION—LEGAL STRATEGIES

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil to enter executive session at 9:24 p.m. to discuss a possible land transfer and legal strategies.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

The Board returned from Executive Session at 10:08 p.m. with no action taken at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Groh stated that the Buckley Hill Road Project is 99% complete.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:10 p.m.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Bell</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Recorded and transcribed by:
Lynn Landry