



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Board of Selectmen

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TOWN CLERK

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 Via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal

MINUTES

Roll Call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Susanne Witkowski and Ken Beausoleil. Others: Janet Blanchette (MSRAC/BAR Grants administrator), Frank McGarry (Registrar of Voters), Marie Mongeau (BOS Executive Assistant), Town officials, Board/Commission members, Members of the public, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by First Selectman A. St Onge via Zoom.

- I. Approval of Minutes
 - A. BOS Special Meeting 3-24-2020- no action taken
 - B. Motion K. Beausoleil seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the minutes of the BOS Special Meeting 4-14-2020 carried unanimously.
- II. Correspondence: DESSP – March 2020 Services
- III. Selectmen Comments:

S. Witkowski- is pleased to keep town business on track with everything happening. She offered thanks to the town's recording secretaries for being able to keep the public informed

K. Beausoleil- using the on-line format is quite challenging and yet the BOF is working diligently to get a budget completed for the public

A. St Onge- encourages public comments through use of the form on the town website. She and BOF Chair Aaron McGarry have scheduled 2 Special BOF budget meetings: April 27, and April 30. Thanks to Ida Ransom who sewed face masks for town hall staff!
- IV. Citizen Comments: none
- V. Riverside Drive Sidewalk Design Award Recommendation MSRAC: J. Blanchette – the committee recommends that the bid be awarded to Freeman Companies, Glastonbury, CT, one of the 7 bidders. They utilize a Traffic Engineer and a Landscape Architect and are familiar with LoCIP grant funding procedures. K. Beausoleil confirmed that the BAR Grant covered re-engineering the Blain Road intersection, environmental assessments and other aspects of the revitalization project, which will connect the two mill sites on Riverside Drive, about 740 feet, with upgraded sidewalks and a bus shelter near the town hall.
Motion S. Witkowski seconded by K. Beausoleil to award the Riverside Drive Sidewalk Project to Freeman Companies, authorizing the First Selectman to sign the contract, carried unanimously.
- VI. Conflict of Interest - Meals for Election Workers: someone has brought forward the possibility of a conflict of interest: the food provided to voting day workers comes from a business which First Selectman A. St Onge and her husband own. A. St Onge reviewed the situation: G-7 Caterers has provided the food for voting day workers for the 16 years she

and her husband have owned the business, as well as since the 1980s when the Groh family were the owners. In order for the discussion to be handled appropriately, she exited the meeting completely at 7:14 PM, asking S. Witkowski to serve as Acting Chair and to text her when it is appropriate for her to re-enter the meeting. F. McGarry took issue with the wording of the agenda item, as it was posed as a possible Selectman's conflict of interest.

K. Beausoleil and S. Witkowski have copies of the April 8, 2020 memo created by the two Registrars of Voters regarding this matter, which reviews Ordinance 10-009. It is unknown if anyone has reached out to the Town Attorney. K. Beausoleil asks the date of the next voting event; F. McGarry – the Presidential Primary will be August 11. It looks unlikely that there will be a Budget Referendum this year. Questions: Is there a contract with G-7 for the voting day food? No. Is a contract for this feasible? Not easily, as the count of the workers and their specific food requirements are only known very close to the voting day. Has there been any negative comment about the current provision of food? No, praise has been received for being accommodating, delivery directly to the voting places, and meeting specific individuals' food requirements. No other caterer is known to have approached the Registrars to be considered as the food provider. Statute is cited in the Registrars' memo permitting food service or other services by those who hold office if the potential benefit is no greater than to any other provider of the same service.

Another aspect of the Ordinance: workers/moderators on voting day are prohibited from serving if they hold office. However, those who step up to serve are office holders. Can the Ordinance be unenforceable, as the Registrars state? They call for a waiver of the Ordinance on voting days, noting that in Section 4, the BOS may do so. K. Beausoleil: there is no Ethics Committee but there is an Ordinance Committee which could do a review. He suggests a review by the Town Attorney of all materials related to these two aspects of discussion, with discussion at the May 5 BOS meeting. F. McGarry asks that a copy of the results of that inquiry be copied to the two Registrars. At 7:31 PM, First Selectman A. St Onge was called back to the meeting. No, the Town Attorney has not been consulted regarding these matters. K. Beausoleil- in order to avoid any appearance of impropriety, will serve as the contact with the Town Attorney, and as the liaison for setting up a set of questions to address these several concerns; he will include the Registrars' memo in the document.

VII. Other Business: none

VIII. Citizens Comments: F. McGarry, 225 Chase Rd: offered praise for the excellent effort by the BOS, which has found ways to maintain services in this challenging time. He asks about the status of tax abatements for fire department personnel. M. Mongeau: 4 of the 5 stations had submitted paperwork as of a few days ago, confirming that EMS staff qualify as well.

IX. Tax Refunds: none

X. Motion S. Witkowski seconded by K. Beausoleil to adjourn at 7:39 PM carried unanimously.

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.