



Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes
Thetford Town Offices

Monday, January 22, 2018 at 7:00 pm.

Stuart Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Selectboard Members Present: James Dixon, Jessica Eaton, Stuart Rogers, Douglas Stone

Selectboard Members Absent: Li Shen

Others Present: Tracy Borst (Town Clerk), Martie Betts (Selectboard Assistant)

Community Members Present: Phebe McCosker, Sarah Sully, Mike Kiess, Bill Huff, Didi Pershouse, Alden Nichols, Tamarah Goldensher, Charles Goldensher, Bob Walker, Mary Bryant, Stuart Blood, Sean Mullen, Duncan Nichols, Judith Harvey, Mary Chin

Public Comment 7:03 p.m.

Mike Kiess asked the Selectboard if there should be something on the warning for Town Meeting about the Town acquiring the Timothy Frost Methodist Church building. There was discussion about having a table at Town Meeting to do a survey or poll. Stuart Rogers said the issue could be put into other business, which is just information on what has been discussed, and what may be discussed in the future.

Bill Huff said he would like to see something in the budget about the interest on the bond. Stuart Rogers said it is a currently a budgetary line.



Minutes & Warrants w/Correspondence 7:15 p.m.

#4.1 \$617.92

#3.1 \$2,936.40

#2.4 \$19,480.05

#2.2 \$10,318.21

#3.3F \$27,064.98

Motion by Stuart Rogers to accept the warrants as presented. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by James Dixon to accept the Regular Selectboard Meeting Minutes of January 8th, 2018, as edited. Seconded by Stuart Rogers. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to accept the Regular Selectboard Meeting Minutes of January 15th, 2019, as edited. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE (3-0-1)** Jessica Eaton abstained, not present at meeting.

Motion by Douglas Stone for the Selectboard Chair to sign the Annual Renewal Full Service Maintenance Agreement with WB Mason for the Clerk's Office copy machine. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Douglas Stone said he spoke with a Board Member of the Thetford Center Community Association and the Association does not feel the need for a Memorandum of Understanding for plowing the TCCA driveway.

James Dixon said the Recreation Advisory Committee has asked about changes to a Recreation policy. Selectboard members agreed that policy changes would be at the discretion of the Recreation Director.



James Dixon received an email with a formal request to appoint Stacy Barton and Kevin Brooker to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Jessica Eaton said a resident was still having problems with dogs barking near his home.

Petition Discussion for Warning of Town Meeting 7:32 p.m.

Stuart Rogers began the discussion by clarifying that the Selectboard has only discussed the statutory process for the request to put the non-binding Resolution Regarding Climate and Energy on the Town Meeting Warning. Stuart Rogers stated that there has been no decision made on the request.

Stuart Rogers reminded those present that the Selectboard is not legally required to put it on the Warning. Stuart Rogers said the Selectboard is not changing any policy of the Town, but is following State statute. Any decision made does not dictate nor tie the hands of any future Selectboard. Stuart Rogers said he is opposed to approving any single article without approving all of the articles in the warning. Stuart Rogers also said he would prefer that this article would be presented by private citizens and not a town committee.

Stuart Rogers discussed Section 9 of the Personnel Policy, which refers to Political Activity, and the need to update the Committee Handbook.

There was discussion about what a non-binding resolution means. Stuart Rogers said a non-binding resolution does not commit the Selectboard to any action.

Bob Walker said he knew concerns were raised about the resolution being a political issue, but he believes this is a scientific issue. Bob Walker said there was nothing in the resolution about carbon tax, but instead it is an issue of climate change and causes associated with it, which affects every resident in Thetford. Bob Walker said he spoke with General Counsel Jennie Prosser, at the Secretary of State's Office about the Selectboard considering non-binding advisory articles. Bob Walker said there were no concerns raised about the Energy Committee bringing this forward to town.



There was discussion about a Valley News article from December about a petition written by 350Vermont.org. Bob Walker said that Vermont citizens helped develop the resolution, 350Vermont.org adopted it. That organization brought it to TES and asked if TES would be willing to work with them to reword it to be more relevant to Thetford.

Judith Harvey asked how a town-wide discussion on energy use and it's interaction with the needs on the planet could take place. Judith Harvey asked how there might be a community discussion if the Selectboard did not put the non-binding resolution on the warning.

Jessica Eaton noted that there was enough interest with 110 signatures on the petition, but it just doesn't fit the structure for the warning.

Phobe McCosker said the state is encouraging towns to create an Enhanced Energy Plan, with the goal of becoming 90% renewable by 2050. Mary Bryant explained that Tim Briglin, Jim Masland and Mark McDonald attended an Energy Committee meeting, and said the towns need to push the Legislature by showing support and interest in the Enhanced Energy Plan. Mary Bryant expressed concerns about the length of time it will take, and what effects will we experience if action is not taken.

Bill Huff submitted a written statement to the Selectboard, and read it aloud to the group. Bill Huff stated his concern "is not about whether or not you agree with the premise of the proposed article or not, it's about the ability of outside entities to interfere with Thetford business." At the end, Bill Huff said he "would ask the Selectboard in consideration of State law, to respectfully deny the petitioner's request."

Stuart Blood expressed concerns about a Selectboard denying the request to put a non-binding resolution before the Town. Stuart Blood referred to several he could recall being on the warning in the past, and said he did not know of any other instance where a request was denied. Stuart Blood said this was a way for towns across the state speak in unison, and send a message to the representatives; either State or Federal.



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Duncan Nichols said he is not a member of the Energy Committee, but does believe this is town business. Duncan Nichols said he believed it would be wrong to eliminate it from a town forum.

Didi Pershouse said she was not going to offer an opinion on the petition but said this is an issue of renewable energy, and the state is asking the town to do certain things. Didi Pershouse said that renewable energy is not about climate change, but about our capacity to withstand possible oil shortages. Didi Pershouse said having renewable energy provides a level of protection and security. Did Pershouse said the State is asking our town to do something and this will give us an opportunity to do that. Didi Pershouse said we need more opportunities to figure out how we are going to deal with flooding with so many dirt roads in the town.

Stuart Rogers thanked everyone for their input and reminded them that the Selectboard is still only in the deliberating process. Stuart Rogers will seek more information from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

Legal Update w/Town's Counsel (Anticipated Executive Session) 8:09 p.m.

Stuart Rogers **moved** to find that premature, general public knowledge of legal updates would clearly place the municipality involved to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion made by Stuart Rogers to discuss legal updates with inclusion of town counsel in an Executive Session per *Discussion of Matters as per IV.S.A., subsection 313 paragraphs A1 & 3*. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to exit Executive Session at 10:14 p.m. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Other Business 10:14 p.m.

- Town Meeting & Warning Update



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The Selectboard reviewed a draft of the warning for Town Meeting. The Town portion of Town Meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. on February 3rd. The School Board will recess if they are not done at 10:00. Pre-Town Meeting will be on February 26th.

There was discussion about organizations that failed to request annual appropriations.

Motion by Stuart Rogers to adjourn the Regular Selectboard Meeting at 10:50 p.m. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**



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