



Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Thetford Town Offices

Monday, February 26, 2018 at 6:30 pm.

Stuart Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Selectboard Members present: James Dixon, Jessica Eaton, Stuart Rogers, Li Shen, Douglas Stone

Others present: Jill Graff (Town Treasurer), Mary Ellen Parkman (Zoning Administrator), Chad Martin (DPW Foreman) Martie Betts (Selectboard Assistant)

Community Members present: Bill Huff, Helen Huff, Wayne Parks, Cathy Newbury, David Newbury, Jean Gerber, Kristen Downey, Sean Mullen, Charlie Goldensher, Joe Tofel, Phebe McCosker, Don Fifield, Susan Rump, Arthur Roy, Sarah Martel, Bob Watson, Todd Wagner, Robin Pettingell, Dirk Borst, Mariah Whitcomb, Chad Whitcomb

Public Comment 6:35 p.m.

No public comment

Minutes & Warrants 6:36 p.m.

#5.3F \$319,650.49

#8.3 \$1,220.04

#7.2 \$10,750.73

#8.1 \$9,826.37

Review of payroll ending 2/24/18

Motion by Stuart Rogers to accept the warrants as presented. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

2018 Liquor License Renewals (Liquor Commission) 6:45 p.m.

Motion by Stuart Rogers to recess the Regular Selectboard Meeting and convene a meeting of the Liquor Commission. Seconded by Jessica Eaton. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers for the Selectboard to sign the 2018 Annual Liquor Licenses for Wings Market, The Village Store, Baker's General Store and Hugget's Mini Mart. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to adjourn the meeting of the Liquor Commission at 6:50 p.m. and reconvene the Regular Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

DPW Truck Quotes (550 Replacement) 6:51 p.m.

Chad Martin reviewed bids for the replacement of the 550 Truck.

Motion by Li Shen to approve the Department of Public Works purchase of a 550 truck at Gateway Motors, in accordance with the DPW Capital Expense Schedule and seek a trade-in for the Town's 550 truck presently at Gateway Motors for repairs. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Douglas Stone to accept the bid from Lucky's to equip the truck with the body, plow and sander. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Candidates Forum 7:06 p.m.

Li Shen informed those present that she has been on the Selectboard for one year and is happy to run for a 3-year term. Li Shen said it is an interesting time in the Town for various reasons; the Treasurer is retiring, which means the Selectboard will need to appoint a Treasurer until the end of the term, the Act 27 law which could change the process of electing a Treasurer or Town Clerk to appointing the positions, and possibly a radical change in Town governance to a Town Manager. Li Shen said it was an invigorating and interesting time for the Town and she would be happy to be a part of that, and to continue to work with her excellent colleagues.

Sarah Martel said she is running for a position on the School Board and for Town Moderator. Sarah Martel said she is a fan of the Town Meeting form of government and believes everyone should have a chance to express their views and be shown respect. Sarah Martel said she loves the Town and these opportunities seem like a great way to serve the Town.

Kristen Downey said she is seeking re-election to School Board. Kristen Downey said she has just finished a 2-year term and is running for the 3-year term. Cathy Newbury asked Kristen Downey about cuts in the salary of the Spanish Teacher, how that will impact the students, and would Kristen Downey work to bring that back up. Kristen Downey said the reductions were a product of declining enrollment from Thetford Elementary School. Kristen Downey said the decision was not easy, but the position has been reduced to part-time and the impact on students is minimal. The 4th grade class will have one less 30-minute session of Spanish each week.

Charlie Buttrey said he is running for a 2-year seat on the School Board. Charlie Buttrey said these are interesting times on the School Board as well, as there is ongoing discussion about potentially realigning with the Supervisory Union.

Joe Tofel said he is seeking to continue to be a Trustee of Trusts for a 3-year term. Joe Tofel said he enjoys managing the trusts and they've done well. Joe Tofel explained that the funds are there for people who need help with heating, scholarships, library and other things including home health care.

Sean Mullen said he has been on the Planning and Zoning Board and is currently on the Development Review Board. Sean Mullen said he is announcing his interest in being a write-in candidate for the open Lister position.

Stuart Rogers said that Jessica Eaton is not running again for the 2-year Selectboard seat, no one is on the ballot and no one has entered as a write-in candidate.

Pre-Town Meeting (Budget Corrections) 7:18 p.m.

Mark McMahon, the Town Moderator explained that rules would be relaxed at this pre-Town Meeting but not during Town Meeting. Mark McMahon said this meeting is a good opportunity to ask questions if something isn't understood in the town report.

Mark McMahon read the Town Meeting Warning.

Discussion points of Articles:

Article 1 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Error in the DPW section of the budget on page 66. The new Line Item for Project Loan Interest did not get tallied into the total. This will either be an amendment at Town Meeting or will be discussed later in the year at an anticipated Special Town Meeting.
- There will also be discussion of a bond to cover repair costs for road damage due to the July 1, 2017 storms at this Special Town Meeting.
- Stuart Rogers said there is a placeholder in the budget that covers a 3-month period of salary for a Town Manager or Administrator. A Town Manager position needs to be approved by voters by Australian ballot. Stuart Rogers explained that Act 27 allows the option of having a Town Clerk and Town Treasurer appointed or elected.

Article 2 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers noted that Articles 2 and 3 have previously been as one article, but the Selectboard was advised by VLCT to make them separate Articles, as there are 2 questions being asked.

Article 3 no discussion.

Article 4 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers noted in the Budget Summary page changes to the DPW budget, the PD budget now includes the 3rd Officer for a full year, increases in telecommunications and employee benefits.
- Stuart Rogers pointed out that the Town has additional members eligible for benefits, and an increase in insurance costs. Treasure Island is now under the Recreation Department, so the Recreation Director has become a full-time position, eligible for benefits.

- Stuart Rogers said there is money in the budget to cover a professional audit, which will need to occur due to the amount of Federal funds the Town will be receiving.
- Stuart Rogers explained the line item for the Thetford Hill Pedestrian Project.
- There is an increase in the Clerk and Town Hall budget to cover the costs of a 4 election year. Computer licensing agreements have gone up and the Town hall building will need some repairs and a new septic system.
- Stuart Rogers explained the reasons behind the across-the-board 15% reduction to the Appropriations or Social Services for the Town. The percentage of the total budget in previous years has been just over 3.5%, where many other Towns are between 1% and 2.5%.

Article 5 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- The Department of Public Works has a wage increase because they are back to a full 5-person crew.
- Act 64 will require a \$2000 permit and then \$400 annually. Act 64 requires specific road maintenance to handle water run-off. The Town has approximately 87.5 miles of roads. Mary Ellen Parkman (Zoning Administrator) said she will be working with Chad Martin (DPW Foreman) to do the required road inventory due to the State by 2020.
- Stuart Rogers said the Town will need continuing funds for Route 132 after the repairs are done caused by the July 1, 2017 storms. The federal funds will repair Route 132 to the level of previous condition.
- There is an increase in winter road supplies that take into consideration a 5-year average of costs, versus a reaction to just the previous year.
- There is an increase due to the addition of bridges that will need to have studies conducted.

Article 6 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers said Articles 5, 6 and 7, the Capital Equipment Funds, were separated out this year.

Article 7 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers explained that the 3rd Police Department Cruiser is a replacement from when the 3 PD vehicles were lost due to arson. Stuart Rogers said the equipment outfitting of the new vehicle will still be covered by insurance. This vehicle will be a half-ton truck with 4-wheel drive.

Article 8 no discussion.

Article 9 addressed by James Dixon.

- James Dixon explained that the Article is designed to enable Treasure Island to bring in more revenue, reduce the tax burden and allow for private donations.

Article 10 no discussion.

Article 11 addressed by James Dixon.

- James Dixon said this is a request to change the name of the line item fund to allow funds to be used for other Recreation facilities. This fund does not cover Treasure Island. There will be an amendment at Town Meeting to note this.

Article 12 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers said the Service Officer and Director of the Food Shelf will be retiring. The Food Shelf will be moved back under the Town, and this will be a reserve fund by donation.

Article 13 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers said the Town needs to consider how appropriations are determined in the future. For this year, an across-the-board cut was made to help with the difficult budget the Town faces.

Article 14 addressed by Stuart Rogers.

- Stuart Rogers said the Selectboard wanted voter input as this is a significant change to the Fire Department.

Article 15 addressed by James Dixon.

- James Dixon explained that changes made to the original petition did not change the meaning, only made it into the form of a question, which would allow it to be an Article. James Dixon said language that was considered binding also had to be changed. These changes were made at the recommendation of VLCT.

Article 16 addressed by Jessica Eaton.

- Jessica Eaton said the United Church of Thetford has been discussing options for the 2 buildings they own and would like to know how residents feel about the Town acquiring the Timothy Frost Methodist Church building. Stuart Rogers said the Selectboard has discussed this possibility and expressed interest in the building. The Church and Town Hall were built together by the same builder, same bricks, and are in close proximity to each other. Timothy Frost Methodist Church has no water and no sewer.

The discussion of Articles ended at 9:04 p.m.

Old Business

- Upcoming Agendas - No Selectboard Meeting between town meeting and elections.

The Selectboard received the letter of resignation from Town Treasurer Jill Graff, effective June 7th, 2018. Stuart Rogers expressed, on behalf of the Selectboard, thanks to Jill Graff for her 14 years of service as the Town Treasurer.

Town Meeting & Elections

Other Business

The Selectboard received a letter from the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District with the 2018 dates for Large Trash Collections Day. Douglas Stone said the Thetford Center Community Association has given permission to use the TCCA driveway for the Large Trash Collections Day.

Motion by James Dixon for the Selectboard Chair to sign permission to have a Special Large Trash Collection Day event on April 14th, 2018 and October 31st, 2018. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

- Personnel Discussion (Anticipated Executive Session)

- Ratification of DPW Union Contract ?

Motion by Douglas Stone to sign the local International Union of Public Employees agreement for DPW employees, for 2018 through December 31st, 2020. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Douglas Stone for the Selectboard Chair to sign the Acknowledgement of Arbitration, to be witnessed by the Town Clerk. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Stuart Rogers **moved** at 9:34 p.m. to find that premature, general public knowledge of personnel and legal matters would clearly place the municipality involved to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to discuss personnel and legal matters in an Executive Session per *Discussion of Matters as per IV.S.A., subsection 31,3 paragraphs A1&3*. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by James Dixon to exit Executive Session at 9:51 p.m. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by Douglas Stone to approve and sign a legal letter from the Town to a Town employee, dated Feb. 26, 2018. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by James Dixon to approve the agreed upon amount of union health insurance premium coverage, retroactive to January 1, 2018, as per contract, for all current NEPBA members. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

Motion by James Dixon to adjourn the Regular Selectboard Meeting at 10:02 p.m. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (5-0-0)**

