



Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Thetford Town Offices

Monday, April 2, 2018 at 7:00 pm.

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

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

Others present: Jill Graff (Town Treasurer), Chad Martin (DPW Foreman), Martie Betts (Selectboard Assistant)

Community Members present: Bill Huff, John Bacon, Cathee Clement, Michael Kiess, Robert Pulaski, Wayne Parks, Dori Wolfe, Bill Bridge

Public Comment 7:03 p.m.

Chad Martin said so far mud season was going okay.

Candidates Forum for Appointment to Selectboard Vacancy 7:16 p.m.

Stuart Rogers welcomed candidates Bill Huff, Cathee Clement, Jim Zien (who joined the meeting via Skype), and John Bacon, and thanked them for coming to the Selectboard meeting.

Cathee Clement said that she loves serving the Town of Thetford, and has served on the Selectboard in the past. Cathee Clement said she believes she has unique characteristics that can be helpful and would love the opportunity to serve again. Cathee Clement said she was raised to take a look around, see where help was needed, and volunteer.

Jim Zien said he retired as the Executive Director of the Aloha Foundation about 2 years ago, and has a background in public real estate planning and development. Jim Zien said he also has experience in non-profit management primarily in public planning and art and cultural institutions. Jim Zien has previously served on the Library Board, and the search committee for the Police Chief. Jim Zien said he is interested in applying his experiences to some of the things

that are coming up in the Town and is interested in engaging in the discussion for a Town Manager or Administrator.

Bill Huff said he has been at almost every Selectboard meeting for the last 3 years, that he cares for the Town and believes he has something to contribute. Bill Huff said the Town governance decision needs to be made quickly and methodically. Bill Huff said the Town needs to prepare for second Town Meeting, as well as sizable bond issue. Bill Huff said other projects the Town is dealing with include finishing the sidewalk project, the replacement of the Town Hall septic system, passing a Town Plan and the transition to a new Treasurer. Bill Huff said he is going to run for the Orange County Senate Seat in the fall, and the terms will overlap for about 60 days. Bill Huff said if the Selectboard did not find him as the ideal candidate he wanted to throw his support to Cathee Clement.

John Bacon said he had served on the Selectboard for 12 years, and after this almost 2-year reprieve, he would like to be back on the Selectboard as there are a couple of projects he would like to see completed. John Bacon said the biggest project is the Town Manager and new Treasurer, as well as the side walk project. John Bacon said he also would throw his support to Cathee Clement if he was not the candidate chosen.

Questions for the Candidates:

Wayne Parks asked all the candidates why no one filed a petition to run knowing that the position was open.

Bill Huff said he knew his Senate Campaign was going to take a lot of time, but since this is a 1-year appointed position, he came to the decision he could do both. Jim Zion is just leaving the Upper Valley Land Trust Board and thought this would be the right time to volunteer for the Town. Cathy Clement said that things in her personal life have settled, she talked to a lot of people and to her family, and this seemed like the appropriate time. John Bacon said he deliberately didn't run in order to bring a point to all the work that a Selectboard does, and he thought there would be a write-in candidate. John Bacon noted that there has been a discussion about having a Town Manager for two years.

Michael Kiess asked the candidates what was going to be the hardest part for them personally, where are they going to need help to be successful?

Cathee Clement said one of her strengths is the way she moves a process forward; who needs to be at the table, where do we need to get information from, build consensus, and move forward quickly. Keeping that pace is challenging. Bill Huff said his biggest challenge is the number of projects he's passionate about and wants to solve while running a campaign as well. Jim Zien would want help from other members of the Selectboard, staff and active community members to learn the needs of areas of Thetford his is less familiar with. John Bacon said in hindsight he needs a little more forward movement getting information instead of waiting for someone else to do it.

James Dixon said as we move towards a Town Manager position the Selectboard will inevitably let go of focus on day to day business which means being able to collaborate and share power with a Town Manager. James Dixon asked the candidates their thoughts on that.

Bill Huff said that power sharing is delineated by statute and the Town would have to find the right candidate. Bill Huff said first the Selectboard needs to define the Town Manager job and the jobs of people in this building. Bill Huff said if we do that well we shouldn't have some of the problems other towns have had, and if done successfully the Selectboard becomes more of a policy maker.

Cathee Clement said she echoed what Bill Huff said, and that everybody is all in this together. Cathee Clement said she is a fan of hierarchical structure, but thinking about how everyone works together, what's best for the town, especially the people who do the work means everyone's viewpoint is useful. Cathee Clement said the people who are actually doing the work are going to be the most valuable source of information. The Town Manager is another person bringing their thoughts and viewpoint.

Jim Zien said that he's been in the role many times in professional life working for a Board as an Executive Manager, which gives him some perspective on what the relationship between a manager and a volunteer board looks like. Jim Zien said a board has to be clear about the expectations on the manger and the manager has to be clear with the board. Jim Zien said

successful boards are the ones that develop philosophies, perspectives and policy in a clear way, and provide managers with what they are expected to do in a year or shorter period of time.

John Bacon said that the policy for a Town Manager has to be key and precise in wording. John Bacon said that new Selectboard members will change things, and it is very, very, critical to moving forward. John Bacon said there needs to be a Town Governance Policy before a search committee for a Town Manager.

Tracy Borst asked current Selectboard members and candidates what each of them thought they are missing on the Selectboard.

Douglas Stone said time and energy. Li Shen said a sense of organization, and a sense of process. Li Shen said it is always good to have others who don't leave it all up to one person to do all the process work. James Dixon said someone to step in and share the load and to sometimes push to actively find ways to distribute leadership on the board. Douglas Stone said he thought the learning curve is a much sharper corner this time. Stuart Rogers said he is a very firm believer in the ability to have discussion and dialogue. Stuart Rogers said we don't know it all and don't know what's impacting villages without hearing it from others. Stuart Rogers said it is also important to listen because the majority of people somewhere in their comments have a good, valid point. Stuart Rogers said when we stop listening it makes it a challenge for the Selectboard and tarnishes the institution.

Bill Huff said he tends to be a go-getter, and during his short tenure on the Selectboard he wanted to lead the health care discussion. Bill Huff said in terms of sharing the load he jumped on the road crew which can be one of the more problematic, important and biggest pieces of the Town. Cathee Clement said she has time and energy and focuses her energy well. Cathee Clement said first she looks at the whole picture and then thinks about where to go next. Cathee Clement said she has always loved the story where the girl turns the straw into gold, and that she thrives in an environment of chaos, then bringing order to it. Cathee Clement said she is genuinely interested in how people come together and process. Cathee Clement said she will roll up her sleeves and get in the trenches, and that there is no issue that cannot be solved by bringing people together.

Jim Zien said the Selectboard might be able to have some opportunities to engage the public a little more with technology, especially with a Town Manager coming in, the Selectboard can have more of a leadership role. Jim Zien said Bill Huff deserves a medal for being a participant in so many meetings and it would be great to see more people engaged. Jim Zien said he would work with other Selectboard members to figure out how they could make that happen. John Bacon said he has gained a different perspective in his thinking, and he will be a little more assertive than in the past.

Stuart Rogers thanked Bill Huff, Cathee Clement, Jim Zien and John Bacon for their letters, their interest and their time at tonight's meeting. The Selectboard will discuss during Executive Session with the goal of choosing a candidate to be sworn in at the next meeting.

TSCS Update and Agreement w/Dori Wolfe 8:03 p.m.

Dori Wolfe said the Thetford/Strafford Community Solar Array is fully subscribed, which means there is no need for an outside investor. Dori Wolfe said construction could begin on April 15th, 2018 and she anticipates that it could be completed in June or July.

Motion by James Dixon to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign the Solar Credit Purchase Agreement with Thetford/Strafford Community Solar LLC. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Notices of Treasurer Vacancy & Creation of Town Manager Committee 8:47 p.m.

The Selectboard reviewed the draft notice for the Treasurer vacancy. There was discussion about whether the term ends at the end of Town Meeting, or at the close of polls. Tracy Borst will post a link on the Town website to the State statutes for the Treasurer position as well as primary responsibilities and budgeted hours as designated by the Town.

The Selectboard reviewed the draft notice for the Town Manager Committee. There was discussion about how many people should be on the Committee, and what skills would be needed. There was discussion about the objectives of the Committee.

Minutes and Warrants w/Correspondence & Updates 7:05 p.m.

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|--------|---|
| #13.3F | \$91,003.17 |
| #13.3 | \$6,585.00 |
| #13.1 | \$13, 190.27 |
| CT-1 | Payment of weekly fees for F&W licenses sold. |
| #12.2 | \$3726.86 |
| #4.4 | Check review for payroll. |

Motion by Stuart Rogers to approve the warrants as presented. Seconded by Douglas Stone.

VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)

Motion by James Dixon to accept the regular Selectboard meeting minutes of March 12th, 2018, as edited. Seconded by Stuart Rogers. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by James Dixon to accept the regular Selectboard meeting minutes of March 26th, 2018, as edited. Seconded by Stuart Rogers. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

The Selectboard received a postcard for the upcoming Walk and Bike Summit on May 4th, 2018 in Hartford and White River Junction.

The Selectboard received information about a Property Tax Appeals Workshop on May 1st and 8th in Rutland and Burlington.

The Selectboard received information for upcoming VLCT workshops.

Stuart Rogers commented on the changes that TRORC is making on their Regional Plan

Old Business

Reminder that Big Trash Day will be on April 14th, 2018. Douglas Stone said the Thetford Center Community Association has given the Town permission to use their driveway.

- Annual & New Appointments - Commissions, Committees & Boards

Motion by Stuart Rogers to approve Tim Taylor for a 3-year term to the Development Review Board, Jaime Thaxton for a 3-year term to the Planning Commission, David Forbes for a 3-year term to the Planning Commission, Ann Lavanway for a 3-year term to the Conservation Commission, Sue Fritz for a 4-year term to the Conservation Commission, Steve Lehman for a 4-year term to the Conservation Commission, Libby Chapin for a 2-year term to the Conservation Commission, Sue Tallman for a 3-year term to the Conservation Commission, Douglas Stone and James Dixon for a 1-year term on the Tri-Town Commission, Marty and Michael Bouchard for a shared 1-year term on the Tri-Town Commission, and Mike Wells for a 3-year term on the Recreation Advisory Council. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Other Business 8:14 p.m.

- Approval of Town Forester Services Agreement

Motion by James Dixon for the Selectboard Chair to sign and approve the Agreement for Forestry Related Services effective January 1st, 2018 on Town Conservation Lands. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

- Annual TES 3rd Grade Interviews Request

Stuart Rogers, Li Shen and James Dixon will be able to attend the Town Government Project at Thetford Elementary School.

- ICS 402 Training (4/12)

There will be an Incident Command System Training for municipal executives on April 12th, 2018. The training is 3 hours long.

- Fill a Public Works Truck Food Drive Program

The Selectboard supports the Public Works Truck Food Drive on May 20th, 2018.

- Personnel Discussion (Anticipated Executive Session)

Stuart Rogers **moved** 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 James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion made by Stuart Rogers to discuss personnel and legal matters in an Executive Session per *Discussion of Matters as per IV.S.A., subsection 313, paragraphs A1&3*. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to exit Executive Session at 10:36 p.m. Seconded by James Dixon. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Motion by Stuart Rogers to approve the appointment of Cathee Clement to the vacancy on the Selectboard, for such time until the 2019 Town Meeting. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE (3-1-0)**

James Dixon exited the meeting at 10:38 p.m.

Motion by Stuart Rogers to approve the 2018 season hires for Treasure Island, as recommended by the Recreation Director. Seconded by Li Shen. **VOTE unanimous (3-0-0)**

There was brief discussion of possible schedule for a 2018 Selectboard Annual Retreat.

Motion by Stuart Rogers to adjourn the regular Selectboard meeting at 11:18 p.m. Seconded by Douglas Stone. **VOTE unanimous (3-0-0)**

