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**Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Thetford Town Offices**

**Monday September 17<sup>th</sup> 2018 at 7:00 pm**

Stuart Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:-02 pm.

Selectboard members present: Stuart Rogers, Cathee Clement, Li Shen and Doug Stone. Community members present: Lynn Miller, John Bacon, Kristen King, Curtis Richardson, Sue Tallman, Mike Kiess, Tracy Borst, Chad Martin and Sarah Martel.

**Swearing in of Appointee to Selectboard:** Richard Krzal was sworn in as selectboard appointee till the March 2019 Town Election.

**Public Comment:** Lynn Miller reported that she had seen no action on the Stevens Road repair yet. Stuart Rogers informed the meeting that the State Stream Alteration Engineer still had one issue to attend to. Work is scheduled to start next week. In response to a question by Lynn Miller, Stuart Rogers informed the meeting that the contractor, Hebert Construction from Williamstown, will supply all their own equipment and town road equipment will not be used. The completion date will be December 1<sup>st</sup> at the latest.

**Correspondence:** There was correspondence regarding the Green-Up Coordinator for 2019.

Stuart Rogers reported that Frank Sadowski, a leading expert in human resources in Vermont, is only available to meet with the selectboard on Friday Oct 5<sup>th</sup> or Oct 26<sup>th</sup>. The board agreed that meeting at 10 am or later in the morning would allow Mr Sadowski enough time to travel from Burlington.

**Discussion with the Board of the Timothy Frost Church:** United Church of Thetford Treasurer Curtis Richardson spoke on behalf of the church’s board of trustees. The trustees have voted to divest the United Church of Thetford of two church buildings, the North Thetford Church and the Timothy Frost Church, to

1 concentrate their resources on ministry and community-building. Preserving the  
2 church buildings is no longer affordable. They propose to donate the buildings to  
3 non-profit organizations, provided they have the resources necessary to maintain  
4 the buildings. The trustees also retain the option to sell. Their preference would be  
5 to continue the use of the churches by the community.

6 The Timothy Frost Church is handicapped accessible, it seats 125 people and has  
7 very good acoustics. It does not have plumbing, and thus lacks running water and  
8 bathroom facilities. The choir room to the left of the door could be converted to a  
9 bathroom space. The interior plaster is peeling and needs to be replaced. The church  
10 is heated as of 2010 by a hot air propane furnace in the basement but the building  
11 lacks insulation. The stained glass windows were all refurbished in the 1990's. The  
12 standing seam roof was repaired in 2011 and the steeple repaired and painted. The  
13 trustees agree that keeping the buildings in public use is more important than  
14 retaining some interior features such as pews, although \$4,000 was invested in new  
15 seat cushions. In response to a question from Cathee Clement about parking, Curtis  
16 Richardson said that the congregation used to park in front of the church, the Town  
17 Hall and the Town Garage.

18 The process of transfer would involve the trustees asking the church members to  
19 vote on transferring the church to new ownership. Cathee Clement asked whether  
20 potential new owners would need to present a ten-year plan. Curtis Richardson  
21 replied that the trustees would review the last two tax returns of any potential new  
22 owner. The present operating budget for the church is small as it is not kept heated  
23 in the winter. A near-term big expense would be refurbishing the interior plaster  
24 and the steeple needs to be repainted periodically. Stuart Rogers said that the new  
25 town septic system is sized to handle Town Hall, the Town Garage, Timothy Frost  
26 Church and the TCCA building. The United Church of Thetford board of trustees  
27 would like to hear soon whether the town wishes to acquire the Timothy Frost  
28 Church. Stuart Rogers said that a town vote is needed for the Town to sell a town  
29 property, but not for the town to acquire property. Stuart Rogers said the  
30 Selectboard would get back to the church trustees in October. The Selectboard

1 needs to discuss possible uses for the building, financial feasibility and upkeep such  
2 as cleaning.

3 **Discussion of Special Town meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Cathee Clement and Tracy  
4 Borst have been considering how to attract a good turnout for the October 3<sup>rd</sup>  
5 meeting. Automatic posting to the Thetford Listserv was favored. The content of the  
6 Special Town meeting was discussed. The board felt the meeting should focus on the  
7 issue of placing a Town Manager vote on the November ballot and not on the report  
8 developed by the Town Manager Committee. Sarah Martel asked, in the event of a  
9 vote in favor, whether there would be informational meetings between October 3<sup>rd</sup>  
10 and the November ballot. Stuart Rogers said there would be up to two special  
11 Selectboard meetings for public information plus a time slot on the agenda of every  
12 regular Selectboard meeting. If the vote on October 3<sup>rd</sup> was 'No' - meaning that the  
13 Town Manager question would not appear on the November ballot, then the board  
14 would have to consider whether to raise the issue at the next regular Town Meeting.  
15 It was noted that the reason for getting the Town Manager vote onto the November  
16 ballot is that voter turnout in the November mid-term election is anticipated to be  
17 high compared to the usual voter turnout following Town Meeting.

18 Tracy Borst discussed with the Selectboard how to set up the Multi-Purpose Room  
19 at T.E.S for the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting and what the contingency would be if a paper  
20 ballot were called for.

21 Sarah Martel asked what percentage of voters were needed to call for a floor vote at  
22 Town Meeting and if this applies only to budget votes. Stuart Rogers will check with  
23 VLCT.

24 Stuart Rogers also noted that the wording of a special ballot question is dictated by  
25 State statute and not chosen by the Selectboard. This should be emphasized at the  
26 October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

27 **Discussion of Town Roads and Driveway Policy:** DPW Foreman Chad Martin  
28 commented that the Municipal Roads General Permit does not contain specifications  
29 for private driveways, and that it would divert significant amounts of Highway  
30 Department time if the Town were to replace private driveway culverts. Doug Stone  
31 asked if the Town's driveway culvert specifications fulfilled new regulations. At

1 present there is no need for residents to refer back to the Town for a permit or  
2 specifications when replacing a driveway culvert. Cathee Clement noted that while  
3 the Town could perform driveway culvert inspections, there would be costs to  
4 administer them and for levying non-compliance fines etc. However there would  
5 also be a cost to the Town for public maintenance of private driveway culverts.  
6 Chad Martin said that in his time as DPW Foreman the Town has never replaced a  
7 private driveway culvert, though the Town flushes clogged driveway culverts.  
8 Richard Krzal suggested the Town send a letter to the owner of a driveway culvert  
9 that has failed. Doug Stone said it is illegal for a private culvert to harm a public road  
10 and that people do not adequately maintain their culverts, allowing them to become  
11 30 ft-long 'blockages' of roadside ditches. Cathee Clement suggested that Chad  
12 Martin could keep a record of problem culverts and whether they were clogged or  
13 needed replacing. Cathee Clement said that it would be unfair if the Town replaced  
14 some failed driveway culverts while others were replaced by the homeowners.  
15 Chad suggested a possible approach would be to repeatedly contact owners of failed  
16 culverts and if there was no action to inform the owner that the town would help  
17 with culvert installation free of charge if the owner purchased the new culvert. If the  
18 owner continued to do nothing then the Selectboard and the Fire Department would  
19 issue a warning letter. If the condition of the driveway culvert prevented the Fire  
20 Department truck from crossing it then the homeowner's insurance would become  
21 void. Chad Martin said he approached the culvert issue on a case-by-case basis and  
22 would give a homeowner new culvert specifications if he saw they needed to replace  
23 their culvert.

24 **Personnel Policy Update:** Stuart Rogers reported that VLCT was close to finishing  
25 their review of the Thetford Town Personnel Policy.

26 **'Sick Bank' question:** It has come to the board's attention that some employees  
27 with medical needs are short of sick time while other employees have ample unused  
28 sick time. There is a question of whether employees may be allowed to donate their  
29 sick time to other employees. Stuart Rogers will contact VLCT and town counsel to  
30 find out how other towns deal with this. Since this is a voluntary donation of sick  
31 time and not a requirement it does not appear to be a union contract issue. Tracy

1 Borst commented that there would need to be specific paperwork to allow the  
2 transfer of sick time and she was unsure how different hourly pay rates would  
3 factor into the amount of sick time donated. She will ask the Clerks and Treasurers  
4 Association for information.

5 **Old Business: Tree Warden:** The problematic silver maple tree on Schoolhouse  
6 Road will be taken down tomorrow, weather permitting. The Tree Warden is  
7 obtaining several estimates for the removal of the dead ash trees on Academy Road  
8 and the leaning oak tree on Gove Hill Rod.

9 **Tucker Hill Bridge:** Stuart Rogers is scheduling a time to meet with a  
10 representative of the Daniels Company to look at the extent of repairs needed for  
11 the Tucker Hill bridge and access for performing repairs.

12 **Committee handbook Update:** Li Shen will provide a draft update of the  
13 Town Committee Handbook.

14 **Reposting of Available Positions:** There have been no applications for the  
15 job of Recycling Coordinator. Sally Bugg, the current Recycling Coordinator, would  
16 like to leave the position at the end of the month. The Recycling Coordinator used to  
17 be a stipend position rather than an hourly position and was reportedly not hard to  
18 fill. Cathee Clement proposed we post these available positions on the Thetford  
19 Listserv twice a week and in the Journal Opinion and Valley News twice a month.

20 **Vicious Dog Follow-up:** Ted Levin has not returned the card that  
21 acknowledged receipt of the certified letter from the Town. Town Counsel will  
22 advise us on the next step.

23 **Minutes and Warrants:**

24 #19.4	\$24,686.51
25 #36.1	\$9,273.70
26 #32.2	\$8,069.53
27 #30.3F	\$5,594.96
28 #28.3	\$105,394.18
29 #37.1	\$1,914.65

30 Stuart Rogers **moved** to approve warrants as presented. Seconded by Doug Stone.

31 Vote 5-0-0

1 Minutes of August 27<sup>th</sup> are still on hold.  
2 Doug Stone **moved** to approve the minutes of September 10<sup>th</sup> as amended.  
3 Seconded by Stuart Rogers. Vote 3-0-2 Cathee Clement and Richard Krzal abstained.  
4 Liquor Licenses: The selectboard accepted the temporary liquor licenses approved  
5 by the Town Clerk for September 15<sup>th</sup> and October 6<sup>th</sup> at Camp Ohana.  
6 **Motion** at 9:46 pm by Stuart Rogers to find that premature public disclosure of  
7 personnel matters would place the Town or persons involved to suffer a substantial  
8 disadvantage. Seconded by Doug Stone. Vote 5-0-0  
9 **Motion** at 9:47 pm by Stuart Rogers to enter executive Session. Seconded by Doug  
10 Stone. Vote 5-0-0  
11 **Motion** at 10.13pm by Stuart Rogers to exit executive session. Seconded by Doug  
12 Stone. Vote 5-0-0  
13 Stuart Rogers **moved** to approve a recreation scholarship. Seconded by Doug Stone.  
14 Vote 5-0-0  
15 **Motion** by Cathee Clement that, having received new information, the Selectboard  
16 reverse the August 13<sup>th</sup> decision to take back earnings from a union member.  
17 Seconded by Doug Stone. Vote 4-0-1 Stuart Rogers abstained.  
18 Cathee offered to contact Roxanne Paige about reaching out to get volunteers to help  
19 with the TCCA.  
20 **Motion** at 10:20 pm by Stuart Rogers to adjourn. Seconded by Doug Stone. Vote 5-0-  
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