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2 **Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes**

3 **Thetford Town Offices**

4 **Monday October 1st 2018 at 6:00 pm**

5
6 Stuart Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

7 Selectboard members present: Stuart Rogers, Cathee Clement, Richard Krzal, Li
8 Shen; absent: Douglas Stone.

9 The Selectboard toured the Timothy Frost Church accompanied by Kristen King,
10 Curtis Richardson and Susan Tallman from the United Church of Thetford.

11 Stuart Rogers reconvened the Selectboard meeting at 7:03 at Town Hall.

12 Community members present: John Bacon, Sarah Martel (Town Moderator), Tracy
13 Borst (Town Clerk).

14 **Agenda Amendment:** One item was added to the agenda: discussion of a rate of
15 pay for a temporary position.

16 **Public comment:** John Bacon said there had been no action regarding the leaning
17 tree on Gove Hill Road. He also expressed surprise that the Town garage had
18 purchased a used 310 John Deere backhoe because he thought the intent had been
19 to obtain a trailer for transporting the roller, rather than driving the roller on the
20 road. Residents on Poor Farm Road complained about the 6 hour road closure,
21 posted for Wednesday October 3rd. Zoning administrator Mary Ellen Parkman
22 replied to explain the nature of the road work to the residents. The Town has hired a
23 specialized piece of equipment for one day to remove sections of ledge that interfere
24 with road drainage.

25 **Correspondence:** The skateboarding group at TES thanked the Selectboard for
26 funding the new skateboard ramp.

1 Chad Martin has signed a contract with Cargill to provide the Town's winter road
2 salt. The price of salt has increased by 12% since last year for all salt suppliers. It is
3 anticipated that the Town will use 700 tons of road salt over the winter.

4 The Selectboard received an announcement from VLCT for a workshop on Municipal
5 Employment Law on November 14th. There will also be a workshop on Capital
6 Planning run by Karen Horn, date to be announced.

7 Jean Gerber asked if the Town would allow a book shed at the Recycling Center. A
8 shed less than 8ft by 8ft would not need a zoning permit, however finding a space
9 for a shed would be challenging. Jean was invited to present her idea before the
10 board.

11 **Conservation Commission:** The board received a query from the TCC (Thetford
12 Conservation Commission) as to whether a MOU would be sufficient to pay a
13 contractor for the inventory of natural resources. Stuart Rogers commented that any
14 contract work performed in 2018 must be billed in 2018 because of the town audit.
15 The Selectboard needs to approve and sign any contract or MOU.

16 The board noted that Libby Chapin may not serve on the Conservation Commission
17 if she no longer has a primary residence in Thetford.

18 The Selectboard received a request for approval to use Campbell Flat Road for part
19 of the 5K Foliage Run because the flood damage to the road within the Union Village
20 Dam park has not been repaired.

21 **Motion** by Cathee Clement to approve the request to operate the Foliage Run on a
22 Town Road. Seconded by Li Shen. **Vote 4-0-0**

23 The Town received a request to include more than one Social Service appropriation
24 on the same petition. Stuart Rogers said this is allowed under statute. Tracy said the
25 Town should look closely at the statute wording. The reason for asking social
26 service agencies to submit individual petitions was to allow separate discussions on
27 each funding request because the voters wanted more input.

28 **Temporary Position:** The Town Clerk's budget contains a line item for the Town
29 Hall Technology Initiative that has not been used in the last two years. There is now
30 a need for a person to match, verify and index a large section of the town's land
31 records that have been scanned into digital files. Tracy has identified a title search

1 agent who is familiar with land records and willing to do this work on Saturdays.
2 Tracy would like to offer the temporary worker \$17 per hour with a start date
3 between October 15th and 31st.

4 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to approve the temporary rate of \$17 per hour. Seconded
5 by Li Shen. **Vote 4-0-0**

6 **Request for Abatement of Late Filing Fee:** The Selectboard received a request
7 from a tax preparer to waive the penalty resulting from a mistake in filing a
8 Thetford resident's homestead tax. This resulted in the tax forms being filed after
9 the due date of April 15th as shown by the Town's software. In the discussion it
10 became clear that other requests of this nature have been denied.

11 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to deny a waiver of penalty for late filing. Seconded by Li
12 Shen. **Vote 4-0-0.**

13 Warrants:

14 #31.3F	\$61,458.50
15 #40.1	\$6,330.08
16 #20.4	\$20,551.25
17 #33.2	\$15,023.31
18 #31.3	\$35,136.58
19 #41.1	\$197.00

20 Review of last two weeks of payroll ending 9-22-2018

21 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to accept warrants as presented. Seconded by Li Shen.
22 **Vote 4-0-0**

23 **Update Discussion of Special Town Meeting:** The Selectboard discussed the
24 amount of time to allot to the Town Meeting vote and agreed that one hour seemed
25 sufficient. The discussion on Town Governance will be held after the vote so as not
26 to influence the vote. Sarah Martel asked who would move the motion. Stuart
27 Rogers said it was generally the job of the Chair. The Chair also takes the lead in
28 answering questions. The vote needs to be a 'clear majority.' Tracy outlined the
29 procedure for a paper vote: Ballots and pencils would be handed out, then voters
30 would proceed to a table where they would identify themselves and hand in their
31 marked ballot. The results would be given to Sarah Martel. Stuart Rogers informed

1 the Selectboard that in the case of a 'Yes' vote the Selectboard is required to hold an
2 informational meeting that must be warned ten days in advance. The date of the
3 Special Selectboard Meeting scheduled for October 17th would fulfill that
4 requirement. In the event that we move forward with an informational hearing
5 Cathee Clement will encourage the members of the Town Manager Committee to
6 attend. The report by the Town Manager Committee is available on-line and
7 residents may ask Tracy for hard copies. The basics of a Town Manager's job are
8 also dictated and spelled out in state statute. It was decided that there would be no
9 formal presentation at the Special Selectboard Meeting on Town governance and the
10 board would solicit questions from the public.

11 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to enter executive session with the Town Clerk at 8:40 pm
12 to discuss a warrant. Seconded by Cathee Clement. **Vote 4-0-0**

13 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to exit executive session at 9:29. Seconded by Li Shen. **Vote**
14 **4-0-0**

15 Cathee Clement took input from the board in writing introductory language for a
16 posting to the Listserv about the Special Selectboard meeting that will follow the
17 vote on October 3rd.

18 **Update of Town Committee Handbook:** Stuart Rogers proposed to replace the
19 section titled "Additional Guidelines from VLCT" with the newly updated section on
20 Open Meeting Law and to add the newly written section on Political Activity as a
21 stand-alone section. The board agreed to remove the subtitle on the cover page and
22 replace the cover photograph with an image of the Town seal.

23 **Covered Bridge Repair:** The Town received a proposal from Daniels Company to
24 repair the Tucker Hill covered bridge. The estimated costs are \$7,950.00. The new
25 gable ends will allow an additional four inches of clearance and the correct bridge
26 clearance must be posted on the warning signs. There was an additional quote of
27 \$3,000 for treating the repaired ends with fire retardant. The board questioned how
28 long the treatment would last and will find out from VLCT if the town's PACIF
29 insurance would cover the bridge without the fire retardant. There is currently
30 \$10,000 in the Town budget for bridges.

1 **Motion** by Cathee Clement for the Chair to sign the proposal from Daniels for the
2 bridge repair on condition that we may opt to forgo the fire retardant treatment.

3 Seconded by Li Shen. **Vote 4-0-0**

4 **Tri-Town Discussion:** Stuart Rogers and Peter Berger, the Fairlee representative to
5 TRORC, discussed the inability of small towns to get grants for affordable housing.
6 There is interest from Thetford, Fairlee and West Fairlee in applying as a single unit
7 to get funding for a housing project that would be divided between the three towns.
8 There is also interest in contracting with Thetford for police services and in pooling
9 firefighting resources. The Vermont State Police will no longer contract with towns,
10 starting in 2019. There was discussion of whether County Sheriffs might fill the gap
11 in police services. It was pointed out that while some towns do use sheriffs, they
12 operate a for-profit service and gravitate to contracting with the courts and traffic
13 control work. Thetford is waiting to hear from West Fairlee before scheduling a
14 multi-town meeting to discuss the future of policing.

15 **TRORC Update:** Stuart Rogers reported that at the recent TRORC bimonthly
16 meeting there was in-depth debate about the wording and terms used in Town
17 Plans. The Plan of a neighboring town was voted down because it showed
18 diminished support for affordable housing and an overall lack of significant changes.
19 The Thetford Town Plan expired in May 2016, leaving the Town without standing in
20 Act 250 deliberations. Without a Town Plan Thetford is also ineligible for
21 Community Development block grants and has lost its Village Designation areas and
22 attendant zoning requirements.

23 **Stipends:** Tracy posed a question as to whether Selectboard stipends should be pro-
24 rated, to avoid the situation of a board member leaving right after the stipend is paid
25 instead of serving for the whole time covered by the stipend. After discussion the
26 board suggested that rather than receiving a lump sum in October when tax revenue
27 flows into the Town, that the stipend be paid in two installments, one in October and
28 one in December. Ideally the second installment would be paid in February prior to
29 Town meeting, when there is turnover on the board, but the Town must make all the
30 payments in the same budget year. The board will seek Tracy's opinion.

1 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers that premature public disclosure of personnel matters
2 would place the Town or persons involved to suffer a substantial disadvantage.
3 Seconded by Cathee Clement. **Vote 4-0-0.**

4 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to enter executive session at 10:44 pm. Seconded by
5 Cathee Clement. Vote 4-0-0

6 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to exit executive session at 10:59 pm. Seconded by Li Shen.
7 **Vote 4-0-0** No action taken.

8 **Bids for Tree Removal:** The Tree Warden had solicited bids from several
9 contractors, however the Town received only one proposal, from Hendersons. The
10 bid for \$6,250 includes a group of ash trees on Academy Road three of which
11 require bucket work, the leaning oak tree on Gove Hill Road, removal of all downed
12 trees and site clean up. Stuart Rogers commented that with the proliferation of tree
13 pests and diseases such as ash borer and ash yellows, that the town will need to
14 budget for removal of trees in the Town ROW. Currently there is no budget. Richard
15 Krzal asked that the Tree Warden contact the other contractors to get a definitive
16 'no' before accepting the bid from Hendersons.

17 **Motion** by Stuart Rogers to adjourn at 11:11 pm. Seconded by Cathee Clement. **Vote**
18 **4-0-0**

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