



SELECTMEN'S MEETING May 3, 2011

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 7:30 p.m. at the West Thompson Independent Fire Station. Mr. Bell was unable to attend tonight's meeting for personal reasons.

PRESENT: Lawrence K. Groh, Jr., First Selectman; Kenneth Beausoleil, Selectman; Alison Shea – Norwich Bulletin; Karensa Konesni and Briana Lepore – WINY Radio; Joseph Gaucher; Kevin Walsh; Celeste Fifield; Dale Fifield; Paul Joyal; Robert A. Chamberlain; John Salkiewicz; Robert Jacobson; Ross Eddy; James Seney, Jr.; Rocco Navarro; Betsy Chamberlain; George Therrien; Steven Bodreau; Earl Norman; Norma O'Leary; Diana Couture; Randy Blackmore; Carolyn Werge; Al Landry; other concerned citizens

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mr. Groh, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's of April 19, 2011.

<i>Mr. Beausoleil</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Groh thanked the West Thompson Independent Fire Co. for hosting this evening's meeting. Mr. Groh stated that he had received a memo from Alison Boutough, Library Director, concerning the hire of a new Circulation Supervisor/Computer Support.

Mr. Groh thanked Thompson Together Environment Committee Chair Norma O'Leary for organizing the annual road-side and river clean-up during April. He described how he and his daughter, Ali Groh, found a submerged car in the French River near Mechanicsville and the efforts of the State Police, Woodstock Dive Team and Bungay Fire Dept. in recovering the car. Mr. Groh stated that the full Board had attended the installation of the Enduring Freedom monument on May 1, 2011 at the Oscar Swanson Park. This program was presented by the VFW and Ladies Auxiliary.

Mr. Groh commented that Town Attorney has been reviewing ordinances. The changes will be sent to the Secretary of the Ordinance Committee for distribution to the Committee, and then to Town Meeting.

Mr. Groh stated that today's Transfer Station Tour for the third grade at the Mary R. Fisher Elementary School was successful, and Consultant Winston Averill showed the students many interesting and innovative recycled products.

Mr. Beausoleil stated that the Eagle Scout ceremony for Anthony Dean will be held at the Quinebaug Fire Station on June 19, 2011. There will be an Eagle Scout from Woodstock who will also be honored that day.

Mr. Beausoleil stated that the VFW Memorial Program was outstanding. We may want to consider re-routing traffic for future programs.

Mr. Beausoleil inquired about the streetlight by the entrance of the Quinebaug Fire Station; Mr. Groh said it is being worked on.

Mr. Beausoleil thanked the Fire Departments and volunteers for organizing the upcoming Mock Crash program on May 11, 2011 for the TMHS students.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Landry requested that a list of vacancies of Boards and Commissions be included in the next Selectman's Update. He also asked for information on the submerged car. Mr. Groh stated that the State Police determined that the license plate did not belong to that vehicle and the last known owner of the VIN number was being contacted.

Mrs. O'Leary shared several stories of the road side clean-up and the willingness of citizens to volunteer.

Mr. Walsh asked if any progress had been made concerning the roof problems here at the West Thompson Fire House. Mrs. Fifield stated that many avenues are being explored. They are seeking help with funding. Mr. Groh encouraged her to contact Kevin Kennedy, Director of Planning & Economic Development and arrange a meeting prior to Mr. Kennedy's monthly attendance at the Planning & Zoning Meeting.

Mr. Gaucher asked for an update on the litter near Market Lane. Mr. Groh stated that the Railroad Company has been notified as they own the property.

Mr. Fifield asked for information on the potential change in insurance consultant/broker for the Fire Companies in Thompson and the process of that change.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to add the discussion of the Insurance Consultant and Broker for the Fire Departments as Item 4 a).

Mr. Groh -Yes

Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

DISCUSSION OF INSURANCE CONSULTANT/BROKER

Mr. Groh explained that the Town pays for all insurances. The Board of Selectmen had discussed this particular line item at length during the budget process. The Fire Chiefs did not discuss this issue with the Board. There will be no change in any coverage. We will have the same company and the same coverage, as stated in Mr. Groh's letter to the Chiefs.

Since the Town hired H. D. Segur to oversee the municipal insurance policies several years ago, there have been many benefits, including a net savings, mock OSHA inspections and better coverage. They also help with loss control, preventing future claims and any training.

Mr. Fifield expressed his opinion that the present brokers should have been given the opportunity to present a bid, and he questioned if the service will be as timely.

Mrs. Fifield expressed her concern that the present agent was not given the opportunity to review the policy and services with the Board.

Mr. Chamberlain, of the Chamberlain Insurance Company of Sterling, CT reviewed the history of his company and spoke of the dedication to serving the firefighters.

Mr. Beausoleil stated that this was not a rushed decision. They are making sure that all departments are covered, and that the Town receives the best services for the money spent. H. D. Segur will be looking at all five Fire Departments, and Mr. Beausoleil stated that based on the information available, he views this as most beneficial to all departments.

Mr. Groh reiterated that each line item in the budget is looked at carefully to determine what is most cost-effective for the Town.

It was the consensus of the Board to meet with the Fire Chiefs on May 26, 2011 at 7 p.m. at the East Thompson Fire Station. This will be a Special Selectmen's Meeting.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE RECREATION COMMISSION

There are two long term members of the Recreation Commission whose terms have expired and both have expressed their desire to serve again.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to appoint Catherine A. Thomas and Jeanne M. Dery to the Recreation Commission, terms to expire April 15, 2014.

Mr. Groh *-Yes*

Mr. Beausoleil *-Yes*

ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR FARM BUILDINGS ORDINANCE DOUBLING EXEMPTIONS OF FARM MACHINERY FROM TAX

Mr. Groh had met with the Agricultural Commission to review these two ordinances that have been suggested by the Agricultural Commission. These have not gone to the Ordinance Committee. Mr. Eddy, Chair of the Agricultural Commission, commented that neighboring communities have utilized similar ordinances, to the benefit of the farming community. Connecticut State Statutes authorize such exemptions, and the Agricultural Commission is requesting their inclusion as town ordinances. There are strict criteria that must be met regarding gross income and also exclusive agricultural use of the buildings. There was a discussion of the timeline for bringing this information to the Town Attorney, the Ordinance Committee, to public forum and eventually to Town Meeting prior to October 1, 2011. Copies of the Woodstock Ordinances were presented by Conservation Officer Carolyn Werge.

Mr. Groh read the proposed ordinances into the record. He also presented documentation form Assessor Sebrina Heroux concerning the estimated impact on the Grand List.

Mr. Blackmer commented that the projected impact may be overestimated as no farmer in Thompson reaches the upper limit.

Mr. Groh stated that one way to uphold the rural character of Thompson is to preserve farming as a way of life. He spoke of the economic impact of services required if farmland is developed into residential use.

Mr. Beausoleil noted that State Statutes allows for these exemptions as long as the criteria is met. He believes we need to protect farms and need to bring these ordinances to the citizens at Town Meeting.

Mrs. Couture presented the history of these exemptions, stating that the first program allowed for a \$3,000.00 exemption in 1959, increasing to a \$10,000.00 exemption in 1980, and the present exemption of \$100,000.00 was installed in 1985. This is by local option.

It was the consensus to send these ordinances to the Ordinance Committee and to the Town Attorney, with a target date of Town Meeting in early September, 2011.

APPROVAL OF NOTICE OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Mr. Beausoleil read the Call to Town Meeting into the record. The Town meeting will be held on Monday May 16, 2011 at 8 p.m. in the Tourtellotte Memorial High School Auditorium. The Call has been reviewed by the Town Attorney.

Motion made by Mr. Beausoleil, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the Call to Town Meeting as read.

Mr. Beausoleil -Yes
Mr. Groh -Yes

TAX REFUNDS

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to refund the following overpayment as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.

GMAC \$100.62

Mr. Groh -Yes
Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Groh presented a copy of a Killingly Ordinance concerning Citation and Violation Enforcement. Mr. Groh would like to send this to the Ordinance Committee. There was a discussion of the process and enforcement options. Mr. Beausoleil wanted to be sure there is no conflict with any existing ordinances. It was the consensus to explore this ordinance.

Mr. Beausoleil suggested having the Assessor's Office and Selectman's Office issue One Day Transfer Station Permits when the Tax Collector's Office is not open. This idea will be presented to the Tax Collector.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Mr. Beausoleil, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:15 p.m.

Mr. Groh -Yes
Mr. Beausoleil -Yes

Recorded and transcribed by:
Lynn Landry

