



SELECTMEN'S MEETING
June 3, 2008

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, June 3, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. in the Merrill Seney Community Room.

PRESENT: Lawrence K. Groh, Jr., First Selectman; Sarah F. White, Selectman; Kathleen A. Hiatt, Selectman; Sebrina Heroux, Assessor; John Rice; Robert Werge; Carolyn Werge; Lynn Landry; Mary Masters; Liam Masters; Joseph Donovan; Stephen Benoit; Charles DeVivo; other concerned citizens

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the minutes of the Special Selectmen's meeting of May 9, 2008 with four corrections.

Ms. Hiatt -Yes
Mr. Groh -Yes

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the minutes of the Special Selectmen's meeting of May 16, 2008 with two corrections.

Ms. Hiatt -Yes
Mr. Groh -Yes

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's meeting of May 20, 2008 with two corrections.

Ms. Hiatt -Yes
Mr. Groh -Yes

*Note – Miss White was not present for this agenda item.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Liam Masters in regard to a proposed Eagle Scout project in which Mr. Masters has volunteered to help clean out the Emergency Management trailer.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to add this item to the agenda as item number 4a.

Ms. Hiatt -Yes
Mr. Groh -Yes

*Note – Miss White was not present for vote.

- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from TVCCA in regard to potential cuts at the Thompson Public Library and the possibility of using the Town Hall for the Senior Lunch program.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Connecticut Water in regard to sodium content.
- Mr. Groh presented a notice that the Town will be holding a Hazardous Waste Collection Day on June 21, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Highway Garage.
- Mr. Groh presented the official tallies for the Annual Budget Referendum. Ms. Hiatt commented that there was a 26% voter turnout.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State Siting Council in regard to a request from Cingular to use the cell tower on Rich Road.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from the State of Connecticut Department of Health in regard to safety tips on boating and swimming.
- Mr. Groh presented correspondence from Paul Franklin in regard to the IVS voting system for the use of blind voters in Thompson referendums.
- Mr. Groh presented a work plan for the Plan of Conservation & Development from the Director of Planning & Development. Mr. Groh asked the Board to review it and offer comments.
- Mr. Groh presented information in regard to the proposed Regional Y.M.C.A.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

- Mr. Groh commented that he had a meeting with Joseph Adiletta in regard to the proposed Regional Y.M.C.A. Mr. Groh stated that he mentioned the concerns in regard to using Thompson's name in any correspondence. Mr. Groh stated that he also mentioned holding an informational meeting in Thompson. Ms. Hiatt suggested a Special Selectmen's meeting as opposed to a regular as this topic may generate much discussion. A brief discussion followed. Miss White expressed concern that the documentation in regard to the Y.M.C.A. lists Attorney William H. St. Onge as lawyer for Putnam, but does not list him as lawyer for Thompson. The Board discussed possible scheduling a Special Selectmen's Meeting on June 26th, July 10th or July 14th.
- Mr. Groh commented that he was pleased that the budget passed last Thursday.

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- Mr. Groh commented that there will be a public hearing in the Merrill Seney Community Room at 2:00 p.m. on June 10, 2008 for the Connecticut Siting Council.
 - Mr. Groh commented that the Memorial Day Parade went well.
 - Miss White asked if there was any feedback in regard to the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Quinebaug Volunteer Fire Station. Ms. Hiatt stated that she attended the event and that it was well attended and that it showed what can be done when a team pulls together. Ms. Hiatt stated that it is a lovely facility and that it was a lovely day.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

- Mr. Rice asked if there was a notice on the drinking fountains notifying people of the sodium content. Mr. Groh stated that one would be posted.
- Mr. Rice reminded the Board that the new Auditorium is available as a gathering place for the public meeting on the Regional Recreation Center.
- Mr. Landry asked if there is any news on the high-power lines going through Thompson. Mr. Groh stated that he has not received any new information.
- Mr. DeVivo commented that the fence fell down at the gas station on Riverside Drive and that there is a hole under it for water to run through. Mr. DeVivo said that he notified the Zoning Enforcement Officer approximately three weeks ago but has not received a response. Mr. DeVivo also asked if the Town was going to get the DEP down there to test the soil. Mr. Groh stated that the DEP has tested Mr. DeVivo's well and that he has also asked the Northeast Department of Health to test the well every six months. Miss White stated that it seems there may be items that should have been attended to by the owners of the gas station that have been neglected and that are having an adverse impact on Mr. DeVivo's residence. Miss White stated that she has been there in several different seasons and that there are several things that are remiss. Miss White stated that perhaps the combination of the DEP and the Town getting together and doing an assessment there may be some relief for the DeVivo family. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Groh stated that he has a whole file on this issue and that there has been work done by both the Town and the DEP. Ms. Hiatt stated that she believed that the Planning & Zoning Commission also paid for a study and that the gas station was in compliance. Mr. Groh offered Mr. DeVivo and Miss White to look at the file on this issue. Miss White stated that no action has been taken that has been effective and that she is looking for effective action that will alter their behavior. Ms. Hiatt suggested that Miss White contact Town Counsel as well because action has been taken but has been ignored. A lengthy discussion continued. Mr. Groh asked Miss White if she was going to do some research and bring it back to the Board. Miss White stated that she is unable to commit to that and that she has spent a fair amount of time probably about a year ago going over documents and looking at pictures. Miss White stated that she would probably be unable to do a full assessment of that.

PROPOSED EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT – LIAM MASTERS

Liam Masters explained that he is with Troop 25 out of Putnam, Connecticut and that he would like to obtain the designation of Eagle Scout. Mr. Masters explained the requirements of an Eagle Scout project. Mr. Masters proposed to the Board to clean, inventory and organize the Emergency Management trailer. The Emergency Management Director stated that he met with Mr. Masters when he proposed the project and that this is a worthwhile project for the Town of Thompson.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we support Mr. Benoit and Mr. Liam Masters in this endeavor.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

REAPPRAISAL AND REVALUATION RFP – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh presented the proposed RFP for revaluation by the Assessor's Office. Mr. Groh stated that he is aware there are errors in the dates and that he and the Assessor have already spoke in regard to them. Ms. Hiatt asked if there was any reason for the June 10, 2008 date. Ms. Heroux explained that the timeline allows people to have enough time to get the RFP back to the Town. Ms. Hiatt asked if Town Counsel reviews the RFP. Ms. Heroux stated that the RFP is standard and that he has seen it before, but that she would have Town Counsel review it again. Ms. Hiatt reviewed her questions and corrections with the Assessor. The Board agreed to meet again to finalize the RFP.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to table this until June 10th at 4:00 p.m.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh explained that the grant is applied for by the Town Clerk every year.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to sign the Resolution of the Municipal Governing Body to accept, execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality an application and contract with the State Library for the Historic Documents Preservation Grant and to use our existing non-discrimination certificate in lieu of anything else they request.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

CUB SCOUT PACK 66 SIGN ON TOWN PROPERTY – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh presented a request from Cub Scout Pack 66 to put a 26”x26” sign on the Town Hall lawn advertising their recruitment night.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we allow Cub Scout Pack 66 to put a sign on the lawn advertising recruitment night for a period not longer than one week.

Discussion on Motion: Miss White suggested allowing them to put up the sign for two weeks.

Amended motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that we allow Cub Scout Pack 66 to put a sign on the lawn advertising recruitment night for a period not longer than two weeks.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

BUDGET REFERENDUM QUESTIONS ORDER FOR 2009/2010 – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh explained that the Town Clerk is suggesting an opposite order of the questions on next year’s budget referendum. Ms. Hiatt stated that she sees two issues here; the first is the notification to boards and commissions to be cognizant of the date of the Annual Town Meeting when scheduling their regular meetings, and the second the alignment of the questions on the budget call and referendum vote.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that the Town Clerk, in his notification to Town boards and commissions, highlight the fact that the third Monday in May is the date of the Annual Town Meeting, at least at present, and that boards and commissions should plan accordingly and avoid scheduling their regular meeting dates on that day to enhance participation in the Annual Town Meeting.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that unless we hear otherwise from the Town Attorney, because the Town Clerk had sent this to the Town Attorney, that we align our budget call and our referendum vote so that the questions line up on the budget call and the referendum in the same order.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

APPOINTMENT SPECIAL FIRE POLICE – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh presented six appointments to the position of Special Fire Police.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to appoint to the Special Fire Police John Ducharme, Wendy Pieper, John Rice, Donald Deslauriers, Ashley Lemieux and Donald Lemieux.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

APPOINTMENT JOANN HALL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh stated that he spoke with Ms. Hall and she confirmed that she was interested in serving.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to appoint JoAnn Hall to the Economic Development Commission, term to expire December 31, 2012.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Recuse</i>

*Note: Miss White recused herself from the vote.

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO SELL OR SOLICIT FEES – ACTION NEEDED

Mr. Groh explained that the Town Clerk brought this ordinance to his attention in regard to the processing fee for the permit to solicit. Mr. Groh explained that it currently costs \$25.00 to do a background check for this permit. Mr. Groh stated that the suggestion is to increase the fee to do the background check from \$20.00 to \$25.00. Mr. Groh stated that seeing the fee listed in the ordinance would mean that an ordinance amendment would be required to change the fee. Ms. Hiatt stated that it looks like the entire ordinance should be reviewed as some of the information in the ordinance needs to be updated. Ms. Hiatt suggested forwarding the ordinance to the Ordinance Review Committee. Mr. Groh stated that this was not a dire need. Miss White stated that her understanding is that the Board has the authority to determine the fee. Ms. Hiatt explained that this was not the case because the fee is specifically written in the ordinance. A brief discussion followed. Mr. Groh requested that the Board forward any suggestions in regard to this ordinance to him and that he would forward the suggestions to the Ordinance Review Committee.

REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION FOR TRAINING REGISTRARS – ACTION NEEDED

Ms. Hiatt stated that she spoke with Ada Temple and that the Registrars had not had time to research this agenda item and would not be opposed to tabling this item until the next Selectmen's meeting,

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to table this agenda item to the next Selectmen's meeting on June 17, 2008.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

BUCKLEY HILL PROJECT – POTENTIAL ACTION

Mr. Groh provided updated information to the Board in regard to the Buckley Hill Road project. Mr. Groh explained that he met with the State. Mr. Groh said that the Board has asked if the project was cancelled and the Board went out to re-bid if the Town would lose the money. Mr. Groh stated that the answer he received was that the Town would maintain approximately \$300,000.00 but would potentially lose about \$80,000.00. Mr. Groh stated that the District Engineer said that he would not be surprised if it went up to one of the higher bids that the Town received if the Town were to re-bid the project. Mr. Groh reviewed the State requirements and timeline if the Town were to do this. Mr. Groh also said that the State recommended getting a hold harmless clause from SAS Construction if the Town chooses to go forward with the project. Mr. Groh stated that he would ask Town Counsel if the Town could use existing money in the paving budget for this project. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Groh stated that he would contact the contractor for July's figures as the prices were changing at the start of the next fiscal year.

Motion made by Mr. Groh, seconded by Ms. Hiatt, to table this agenda item until the June 17, 2008 Selectmen's meeting.

<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

ORDINANCE EASEMENT TO PLACE UTILITIES – POTENTIAL ACTION

Mr. Groh presented the recommendation by the Ordinance Committee in regard to the ordinance proposed by Town Counsel concerning easements on Town property for private utilities. A brief discussion followed. Mr. Groh stated that he would forward the Committee's recommendations to Town Counsel for review.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to put this on the June 17th agenda having passed it by Town Attorney.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

DONATION OF LAND TO TOWN – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh explained that he received a letter from a person who wants to donate a piece of land to the Town of Thompson near Little Pond. The Board discussed forwarding this proposed donation to other departments and commissions such as the Assessor, Tax Collector, Conservation Commission, and Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Groh stated that a procedure should be put together for future proposed land donations. Ms. Hiatt also suggested reviewing this proposal with the Department Heads.

ENHANCED MEHIP – DISCUSSION

Mr. Groh presented information on Nancy Wymen's proposal on Enhanced MEHIP. Ms. Levesque stated that Enhanced MEHIP is not the same as Donovan's Bill which allows small businesses to take advantage of the State benefit plan. Ms. Levesque informed the Board that she and the Finance Director have been keeping an eye on the Enhanced MEHIP (Municipal Employees Health Insurance Plan) proposal and that at this point it does not look like the Town would benefit from utilizing the plan. Ms. Levesque explained that the Town is currently participating in MEHIP and that although the Town would be allowed to join Enhanced MEHIP with the currently health plan, the Town would be required to switch plans when the Union contract was re-negotiated. Ms. Levesque also stated that a health savings account alternative is not an option through Enhanced MEHIP. Ms. Levesque said that the School would have the primary decision making responsibility as the Town piggybacks off of them for health benefits.

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER – DISCUSSION/ACTION

Ms. Hiatt stated that she e-mailed her suggestions to the Board members in regard to changes to the proposed ZEO job description. Mr. Groh said that he provided a copy to Mr. Rice and that he has some concerns in regard to the responsibility of preparing materials for meeting agendas. Miss White said that she had recommended a change to the education and experience requirements including dropping the requirement for a bachelor's degree.

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, that with the four changes, adding "material for", putting the equivalency in for the baccalaureate degree, and the two paragraphs that I proposed, that we go forward with this job description via the labor lawyer and put it in place for the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Hiatt stated that she had promised a list of other job descriptions and that she would provide it in July.

Miss White suggested an informal policy to arrange to have the material for the Selectmen's meeting 24 hours before the meeting. Miss White also asked that the agenda have some type of note indicating if the material is new or something that has already been dealt with. Mr. Groh explained that it is not always possible because he receives information later than that but could make a diligent effort to get information to the Board 24 hours before. Ms. Hiatt stated that she would be satisfied with a diligent effort and revisit it later on if the Board does not like it.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Ms. Hiatt, seconded by Mr. Groh, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:00 p.m.

<i>Ms. Hiatt</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Groh</i>	<i>-Yes</i>
<i>Miss White</i>	<i>-Yes</i>

Recorded and transcribed by:
Tonya Levesque