



SELECTMEN'S MEETING
January 7, 2014

The Board of Selectmen held a Selectmen's Meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2014, at 6:59 p.m. at the Town Hall – Merrill Seney Room.

PRESENT: Paul Lenky, First Selectman; Kerstin Forrester, Selectman; Shaina Smith, Selectman; Joseph H. Gaucher, Linda Jarmolowicz, John Rice, Steven Bodreau, Kevin Walsh, Paul Deary, Sally White, Stephen Benoit, Brian Howell, Lt. Scott Smith, Thelma Tremblay, Shawn Johnston, Ryan Munson, Donat Charron, Joe Lindley, Mike Julian, Dan Julian, Harold Hopkins, Charles Devivo, Mike Blackmer – WINY Reporter and other concerned citizens.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting of December 3, 2013, as presented.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

2) CORRESPONDENCE:

1) Paul Lenky reviewed several items: (1) Northeast District Department of Health, Report from the Finance Manager for a Board Meeting on January 9, 2014, regarding the FY 2014 Budget. (2) Flyer from Thompson Recreation, Highway Department and Community Fire Department for Thompson's 8th Annual Holiday Bonfire and Concert at Park/Pond on Main Street. (3) Notice of Building Department's new hours effective January 6, 2014, Monday thru Thursday 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and closed on Fridays. (4) Monthly Police Service Calls Report from Connecticut State Police, Troop D Barracks for the month of November 2013. During the month of November 2013 Troop D responded to 430 calls for service in the Town of Thompson. (5) Letter from Pomfret's First Selectmen, Maureen A. Nicholson to Lee Post, Building Inspector, which states that his term expires on January 19, 2014, and they will not be appointing him for a new term. Mr. Lenky stated that he will still work for the Towns of Putnam and Thompson.

2) Kerstin Forrester read, for the record, a list of emails that were sent to the BOS and emails that were sent directly to Mrs. Forrester. Of note; Maryann Chinatti, the Town Planner, sent a copy of project updates, Ida Ransom sent an email stating that the Thompson Historical Society will be having a presentation on Sports Car Road Racing from the 1950s/60s at the Thompson Speedway on January 15, 2014, Mike Martin sent an email regarding accounts payable, Mike Rivers sent an email regarding the West Thompson Fire Department Final Report, Maryann Chinatti sent an email regarding Branding or Economic Identity for Thompson and Chris Burke sent in a donation request from SACCEC. Also, she noted that the Capital Region Emergency Planning Committee posted a list of functions from each unit and Homeland Security – Department of Environmental Protection sent a list of contacts that she will have posted.

3) Shaina Smith stated that the Thompson Business Association will be meeting at the library on January 8, 2014, to discuss a Business Expo.

Mr. Lenky requested that they add the "Agreement of the Parties Regarding Sewer Extension" to 14) Other Business.

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to add the "Agreement of the Parties Regarding Sewer Extension" to 14) Other Business.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Mrs. Forrester requested that they add the Incident Analysis Report of February 20, 2013, to 14) Other Business.

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mr. Lenky, to add the Incident Analysis Report of February 20, 2013, to 14) Other Business.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

3) SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS:

1) Mrs. Smith stated that the Library Board of Trustees had met and she did not see anything about the sprinkler system replacement. Mr. Lenky stated that they are still waiting for a new revised quotation. Also, Mrs. Smith stated that they should list any vacancies for Boards, Commissions and Committees on the town website. She questioned an opening for an alternate for the Zoning Board of Appeals and Mr. Lenky stated that this position had been filled.

2) Mrs. Forrester hoped that everyone had a wonderful holiday.

3) Mr. Lenky wished everyone a happy holiday as well. He also stated that there have been a few comments made about closing the town hall and cancelling meetings recently due to inclement weather and he stated that his first priority was for public safety. He also stated that he would like to make Thompson a better place to live and that he is working towards that goal with the other Selectmen; further, Mrs. Smith, being young, has some very good ideas and Mrs. Forrester brings a lot of experience to the table as well.

4) CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

●Kevin Walsh – Mr. Walsh asked about the sprinkler system at the library and does it get regular inspections. Mr. Lenky stated that it does and has been passing inspections right along. He further stated that about half of the system has been reconstructed and they need to reconstruct the other half at some point. He stated that they are still waiting for the revised quotation that would indicate a list of material used, would they remove the old material from the building and also there was a question regarding insurance.

●Paul Deary – Mr. Deary inquired about reimbursement for the Probate Court area. He commented that he did some research online to see how square footage should be determined. He noted that usually the hallway as well as any office space is figured into the total charge. Mr. Lenky stated that they will be looking at charging the monthly rental fees based on “combined use space.”

●Sally White – Ms. White inquired of the Board what their approach is when determining the budget. She suggested that an analysis be done on both the IT system and the roles and responsibilities of the personnel in the town hall. She stated that she did an analysis in 1976 when they did not have an IT system in place and the number of personnel in the town hall is the same and also the number of citizens in town has not changed very much since then so why do they still need the same amount of personnel in the town hall when they now have an IT system in place. Also, are they going to have a debate regarding the Sewer Extension Agreement or are they going to vote on the agreement tonight. She also wanted to know if they had any briefings from the NECCOG meetings stating that any policy matters would be appreciated. She further stated that there did not appear to be a compelling reason to close the town hall or the library during the recent storm. Lastly, she asked that they explain why there is now a new Management Union for supervisors. Mr. Lenky stated that regarding the union, he has no idea and that this was voted on during the past administration and he will stand his ground to protect the taxpayers from having to pay any additional money. He also stated, regarding the recent town hall and library closing that they did not know the magnitude of the storm but it was predicted to be very bad and the first concern was with public safety. He stated that they have been having problems with the IT system and they have received a quote for \$2,800.00 to upgrade the system and they will be approaching the BOF for approval. But as far as the budget, they are looking at a zero increase. Ms. White suggested that there

may be programs that could be eliminated or reduced, and Mr. Lenky stated that they are not looking to cut any programs but they will be looking at this.

- Linda Jarmolowicz – Ms. Jarmolowicz stated that at the last BOF meeting it was brought up that a building on Main Street received an electric bill for \$67.00 when the building has been vacant. Mr. Lenky stated that he will ask Leo Adams about this.

- Kevin Walsh - Mr. Walsh asked about the newly formed union and wanted to know how many supervisors are involved and how many hours do they work each week. Mr. Lenky stated that there are 4 supervisors and they work at least 32 hours per week.

5) CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE SERVICE – TROOP D

CT State Police, Troop D commander Lt. Scott Smith, gave an informative presentation regarding the consolidation of dispatch and addressed the changes that have been made to Troop D. He specifically wanted to clear up to any citizens that Troop D is not closed and will not be closing and that they are a 24/7 facility. He stated that in a three month period they had over 600 walk-ins. He further stated that consolidating dispatch freed up a trooper to be put back on the road as a patrol officer. He explained that there is a call box outside of the facility to be used when the lobby is closed which would put them in touch with a call taker and then on to dispatch if needed. John Rice asked if they have tracked the response time from using the call box and Lt. Smith stated that they have not tracked response time as of yet. Mrs. Smith asked about the use of Troop D as a “safe haven” which has been done in the past, and Lt. Smith stated that they can still use the facility unless they are closed and in that case they can use the call box. He pointed out that the use of the facility as a “safe haven” was seldom. Lt. Smith stated that they will be getting the word out to the media and the general public that Troop D is not closed.

6) CONNECTICUT LIGHT & POWER PRESENTATION – SHAWN JOHNSTON:

Shawn Johnston, Community Relations Specialist, who has been assigned to the Town of Thompson as a liaison for CL&P, gave his presentation regarding power outages. He explained when major storms are predicted the first thing that they do is to make sure that they have enough material to replace any damaged lines or poles or other related material and they need to make sure that they have crews available for the repair work. He stated that after Hurricane Sandy, they had to recruit repair crews from 25 different states and from Canada since the area hit was so large. Also, every person who works at CL&P and is not on a crew gets put on storm duty which includes such things as finding hotel accommodations, food and finding laundry facilities since the crew's uniforms have to be kept free of oils while working on the power lines.

After the storm, the first thing they do is to respond to every emergency call, next they send out tree and line crews to open up roads that are completely impassable. They then focus on critical buildings such as fire and police, hospitals, nursing homes and shelters. Finally they move on to bulk restoration which is repair work that covers the largest number of homes. They keep working the bulk restoration until they finally reach the single home outages. He also stated that they have become more aggressive on tree trimming and they are approaching a budget of \$70,000,000.00 this year alone. Ryan Munson asked if he has a tree issue near the lines can he call CL&P and Mr. Johnston said that he should call and they will respond. Thelma Tremblay asked if they receive any revenue from the different electric supply companies and he stated no; and if anyone decides to use other suppliers to make sure that they read the terms and conditions as their rates may change frequently and CL&P rates change twice per year.

7) EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION – STEPHEN BENOIT

Stephen Benoit first introduced Brian Howell, the new Deputy Emergency Management Director, and he stated that he has done an excellent job. He also presented handouts, which explained their mission and their responsibilities; he briefly stated that they run all of the emergency services in town whenever there is a storm or during any potential disaster. They work with the fire departments, building inspectors, BOS, BOF and Shawn Johnston. He also explained that they have a “special needs list” which has been created to help citizens who, for instance, need oxygen or need special attention during emergencies. They would call or visit these people during an emergency to make sure that they have what they need. Also, if there is an evacuation, this list tells them what type of vehicle to send, for instance, if they have someone in a wheelchair. Mr. Benoit also explained that they work with the schools when they have bomb scares or similar emergencies. Lastly, Mr. Howell explained that they provide education to citizens

on what precautions they can take at home and what preparations are needed for potential emergencies. He further stated that they have books and kits to help educate children as well.

8) BLASTING ORDINANCE – DONAT CHARRON

Donat Charron, representing the “Concerned Thompson Citizens against Blasting Damage”, requested that the BOS consider the procedure of having the Ordinance Review Committee review and adopt their proposed blasting ordinance. He stated that they are approximately 50 people of both business and property owners that have been affected with structural damage and water well damage. He also stated that Maine Drilling and Blasting, the company used by French River Materials to do the blasting, have told them when claims are sent to them, that this is not their problem and they are doing the blasting scientifically and within the guidelines. He further stated that under Connecticut law, the town Fire Marshall only has the duty to oversee how the explosives are being transported and stored not how the explosives are actually used on site and record keeping is not mandatory. He further stressed that they need to have regulations put in place to protect the town’s citizens.

Charles Devivo stated that there will be a lot more blasting and dust and noise in the coming summer months. He is concerned that this will continue for another 10 or 15 years. He further stated that he runs out of water now at least twice per week and his well only pumps sand; his well goes down to 1,500 feet. Mr. Lenky stated that while he is concerned with what the citizens have to say he is also concerned with the fact that the blasting has been going on for over 2 years and why are they just now seeing problems. He is also concerned with the fact that there are other projects in town which have been in process for some time and suddenly the citizens are having problems with those projects as well.

Mr. Lenky asked if they want the town to institute the ordinance as presented tonight. Mr. Charron stated that it has been revised and yes. Mr. Lenky also inquired if this ordinance pertains to all blasting that goes on in the Town of Thompson since there are other projects coming up which will require blasting and do they expect them to have a pre-blasting survey for everything. Mr. Charron stated that their main concern is with quarry blasting and that there are no regulations in the state for quarry blasting.

Mr. Lenky then stated that the BOS has to approve the ordinance first and then it is brought before the Ordinance Review Committee and then presented to the town for a final vote.

Kevin Walsh asked a question as to the process and then stated that the BOS determines whether it goes to the Ordinance Review Committee and the BOS can block this right now. Mr. Lenky stated that this is how he understood the process. Mr. Walsh asked that he look into this policy or procedure of approval.

John Rice suggested that they look up the charge of the Ordinance Review Committee. He also suggested that they forward the ordinance to the town attorney as well.

Shawn Johnston suggested that they look at CCM for any suggestions.

9) REARDON ROAD – FRENCH RIVER MATERIALS

Mr. Lenky read, for the record, a memo regarding a trip that he made with Dan Julian, one of the owners of French River Materials, to Waterbury and Monroe, CT to visit; (1) a quarry in Waterbury which is bordered by residential homes which has been unaffected by the blasting. Cosco and Kohl’s also abutt the quarry and there has been no damage to these buildings either. Also they visited a strip mall that was the end result of another project and, (2) in Monroe they visited an industrial park where the Swiss Knife headquarters is located and this building too was built through the blasting with no damage. He further stated that a project of this magnitude can benefit the Town of Thompson and they need to bring business into the town to increase their tax base which would, ultimately, help the taxpayers. He further commented that he is in support of this project and what it could mean to the town. He also wanted to stress that the citizen’s concerns regarding the problems are a priority to this administration and they hope that they can come together and overcome their concerns and move forward.

Sally White stated that he hasn’t been hired as a lobbyist he was hired to work for the town with the town’s best interest.

John Rice stated that Sally White doesn’t want anyone from the outside of Thompson to work for the town, and maybe someone from outside of town would have very good ideas and be very qualified then someone from within the town.

At this point, Mr. Lenky stated that Dan Julian, Mike Julian and Harold Hopkins from French River Materials were present to discuss some of the issues and answer any questions from the citizens. Harold Hopkins stated first that they haven’t blasted on Reardon Road since early September out of concern to the citizens and to critically look at the procedures used for blasting. They have hired an outside independent company, GeoSonics, to conduct surveys at the blasting site and at properties with

possible damage. He stated that letters and phone calls went out to the property owners and the surveys will be starting tomorrow. Mr. Lenky asked how many people signed up for the survey and Mr. Hopkins stated that they have 5 so far who will have a survey and there were 24 originally who requested a survey.

Mike Julian thanked the BOS for letting them be present. He stated that the state requires that they do a pre-blast survey within 250 feet of the blasting and some of the problems are out a couple of miles. He also stated that they have owned the property since 1980 and to do any construction they have to blast and have received approvals from the town for this and they would like to build on this property to bring in business for the town. He also stated that they are working within the town's rules and are trying to do the right thing by doing the survey and if they have caused any problems they will fix those problems. He further stated that every single blast is filmed and monitored and they are well below all of the allowable ranges. He said whether they blast one hole or 5,000 holes they worry about 2 things; ground vibration and air blast.

Sally White asked about the company that they hired for the survey, GeoSonics, and have they used them before and Mr. Julian stated no. She also asked if they have had claims after using Maine Drilling and Blasting before since she noted claims against them on the internet, and he stated that they have never had claims while using them. She asked what restoration they would have to do on the property before they build. Mr. Julian stated that they would grade, bring in topsoil and reseed within the property boundaries. She then asked what type of industry would they be building for and Mr. Julian stated distribution, warehousing and light industry; specifically warehousing that would utilize the railroad which abuts the property. She also inquired about the time-frame on getting a site ready for a tenet. He stated that they are looking at about 2 years. Mr. Lenky re-iterated the time frame to get in a tenet of 2 years and if they would continue to work on-site with construction and blasting if necessary. Mr. Julian said that this is correct.

Donat Charron asked about testing wells and it was stated that the Northeast District Department of Health will be doing this prior to any continued blasting. Mr. Julian also wanted to comment that their proposed ordinance states that they cannot blast within 1,500 feet from a property line and he further stated that they blast within 50 feet from buildings without any damage and that blasting within 1,500 feet would prevent construction at most sites.

Mr. Charron stated that they want to work with French River Materials and that they would welcome the business if not for the problems that they have been having. Mr. Lenky asked about the number of complaints that they have received and he stated that out of 50 people with complaints, 24 have signed up for the surveys and only about 12 have damage the rest are complaints about the noise.

Ms. White commented that a DEEP geologist stated that the area is note suitable for blasting given the geology of the area.

Mr. Hopkins stated that they have hired GeoSonics, who have a geologist, and they have been approved by the town to do the survey. Mr. Julian also stated that they have placed seismographs at property sites and the sites where damage has been claimed and they are well within range.

Mr. Lenky's final statement was that any continued blasting at this site would be as recommended by GeoSonics from this point forward.

10) COMMERCIAL HAULERS FEE

The BOS agreed to table until next meeting.

11) HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT

Mr. Lenky stated that this grant is from the Town Clerk and has been approved in the amount of \$4,000.00 to protect the historic documents.

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith (with discussion), to approve the Historic Documents Preservation Grant. Mrs. Smith asked if this is a matching grant and what does protect mean. Mr. Lenky stated that it is 100 percent funded and that the historic documents would be sent to the state archives.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

12) USEPA BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANT LETTER OF SUPPORT

Mr. Lenky explained that this is the Brownfield Grant for the Belding-Corticelli property for a Phase I and Phase II Study. It is in the amount of \$200,000.00 with no match and is nonrefundable and any money that may be leftover is to be used for site clean-up and a reuse plan. Mr. Lenky stated that this would be for the benefit of the town. Additional discussion was made regarding site clean-up and possible site re-development.

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to approve the application for the Brownfield Grant for the Belding-Corticelli property for a Phase I and Phase II Study. Mrs. Forrester asked what the application due date is and Mrs. Smith stated January 15, 2014.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester – Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Mrs. Forrester requested that the Board get a copy of the letter/application for the grant from the Town Planner for the record.

13) TAX REFUNDS:

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith, to refund the following overpayments as recommended by the Tax Collector, Rene Morin.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester –Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

Craig Aubin	\$41.03
Jennie E. Benedict	\$287.20
Paul T. Deary	\$5.56
Michael K. Green	\$222.00
Michael K. Green	\$231.06
Diane I. Hassin	\$89.68
Megan C. Kennett	\$32.15
Paul D. Lester	\$18.13
Nissan Infiniti LT	\$125.33
Richard D. Novick	\$26.68
Richard D. Novick	\$18.97

14) OTHER BUSINESS:

1) "Agreement of the Parties Regarding Sewer Extension" – Mrs. Forrester stated that the agreement has been updated and corrected. The only addition to the contract was read aloud by Mr. Lenky. "Page 7, Item 27 - The Town of Thompson shall be entitled to have an on-site project representative during construction to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen whose job will be to document and provide information to the Board of Selectman and the WPCA as to the progress of the work and the quality of construction."

Motion made by Mrs. Forrester, seconded by Mrs. Smith (with discussion), to approve and accept the contract with the changes as noted. Mrs. Smith stated that since she has not seen the contract she doesn't feel comfortable to sign unless she reads the contract. Upon reading, Mrs. Smith voted yes.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester –Yes
Mrs. Smith – Yes

2) Incident Analysis of Fatal Fire Report – Mrs. Forrester reviewed the report for the record. She stated that the Fire Advisory Committee listed only the facts of what occurred. She further stated that they have made the corrections needed as required so that this kind of thing does not happen again. She noted that this information will be on the website along with the West Thompson Fire Department critique from Todd Mountford. Kevin Walsh asked if they have received a report from either the local or state Fire Marshall and she stated that she has already been told by the state that they do not have a report and she is still waiting for the local Fire Marshall's report. She also stated that Troop D does not have a report because their concern would be with the cause of the fire.

Mr. Lenky stated that the Transfer Station Advisory Committee requested, for the record, to be placed on the BOS Agenda for the next meeting.

15) ADJOURN:

Motion made by Mrs. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Forrester, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:30 p.m.

Mr. Lenky - Yes
Mrs. Forrester –Yes
Mrs. Smith - Yes

Recorded and Transcribed by Patricia Lacasse.