



Town of Thetford Vermont

3910 Vermont Route 113 • P.O. Box 126 • Thetford Center, VT 05075
802-785-2922 • thetfordvermont.us

Selectboard Regular Meeting *Draft* Agenda

– Online Only –

Monday, January 25th, 2020 7:00 pm

Please note Section 6 of H.681, signed into law on March 30th, 2020, for the temporary suspension of designated physical meeting location requirements.

To connect to Zoom via computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88122490498>

To connect via phone only: +1 (646) 558 8656 | Meeting ID: 881 2249 0498

7:00pm – Call to Order

1. Selectboard reports for Town Report
2. Approval of the Town Meeting Warning
3. Adjourn

DRAFT Green Fleet Report and Vehicle Inventory

In 2020, the Selectboard adopted the Green Fleet Policy with the purpose of setting guidelines to minimize greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to help the Town meet its energy goals while reducing the short- and long-term costs of purchasing, maintaining, and operating Town vehicles. This is the first year of Thetford's inventory of vehicles, fuel consumption and GHG emissions, a summary of which is shown in the two tables that follow.

2020 Police Department Vehicle Fuel Usage and Emissions				
Equipment	Miles	Gallons		Emissions ¹
		Gasoline	Miles/gal	
2015 Ford P.I. Sedan - Scruggs	14,597	1,043	14.0	9.3
2015 Ford P.I. Sedan - Rogers	20,126	1,405	14.3	14.3
2018 Ford F150 PU - Evans	15,119	1,196	12.6	10.6
Total	49,842	3,644	19.2	34.2

2020 Department of Public Works Vehicle Fuel Usage and Emissions						
Equipment	Miles	Hours	Gallons		Gal/hr	Emissions ¹
			Diesel	Miles/gal		
Truck 1 - Ford 550	9,824		949	10.4		9.7
Truck 1 temporary - Ford 550 ²	649		72	9.0		0.7
Truck 2 - 2016 Western Star	6,621	3,124	2,001	3.3		20.4
Truck 3 - 2017 Western Star	7,747	500	2,253	3.4		22.9
Truck 4 - 2018 Western Star	6,490	602	1,793	3.6		18.3
Truck 5 - 2019 Western Star	11,563	654	3,012	3.8		30.7
John Deere Bucket Loader		263	598		2.3	6.1
John Deere Grader		585	3,147		5.4	32.0
Doosan DX140W3 Excavator		449	1,108		2.5	11.3
Hahn Roller		23	62		2.7	0.6
Total			14,994			152.6

¹ Greenhouse gas emissions as CO₂ equivalent, in metric tons. *Emission factors from U.S. EPA.*

² Temporary replacement while Truck 1 out of service.

Town vehicles consumed 3,644 gallons of gasoline and 14,994 gallons of diesel fuel, which resulted in 187 metric tons of GHG emissions. This inventory provides a baseline from which the Town can measure the progress we need to make in emissions reductions.

SELECTBOARD REPORT **** DRAFT *****

At the start of the year, we were surprised by the resignation of Town Manager Serena Bemis Goodall, leaving a void in municipal administration, and interrupting the transition to Town Manager governance. We had another finalist in the 2019 Town Manager search - veteran manager Guy Scaife, who was still seeking a position. Based on his thorough evaluation by VLCT, the Search Committee and the Selectboard, extant board members Douglas Stone, Mike Pomeroy, Li Shen, and Nick Clark unanimously approved Guy to be interim manager on January 12th

On January 13th, the Selectboard was stunned and saddened by the unexpected passing of Mike Pomeroy. In the midst of this tragedy there were things the board needed to do. Foremost was preparation of the 2020 Town budget that was behind schedule. Vacant seats on the Selectboard were filled by Mike Kiess and David Goodrich. We also welcomed Liz Horan as our Selectboard Assistant.

In March Sharon Harkay, Mary Bryant and Steve Tofel were elected to the Selectboard.

History then took a dramatic turn. On March 15th, the board held an Emergency Meeting to discuss the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. All non-essential functions and meetings were suspended until further notice. Town Hall would admit people by appointment only. Designated physical meetings were suspended under H.681, instead the law permitted remote Selectboard meetings using Zoom. Later in the year Town Clerk Tracy Borst and her staff shouldered the unprecedented task of running two major elections, the Primary and the Presidential Election, by mail-in ballot. We thank Representative Tim Briglin for updating us tirelessly as the pandemic unfolded, and Mariah Whitcomb for outstanding planning and execution of safety procedures.

At the end of April, the Town was notified of a pending application from New Cingular Wireless and AT&T to place a 190 ft telecommunication tower near Sawnee Bean Road as part of the federally mandated First Net emergency response network. While federal law supersedes local regulations, the Town does have some bargaining room. In response to residents' complaints that the tower would be a prominent eyesore the board suggested a far less visible location on the Town Forest. Balloon tests confirmed almost no visibility. Land lease negotiations between lawyers representing the Town, AT&T and the residents are in progress.

Among many town services impacted by COVID-19, the decision to keep Treasure Island closed caused major concern among residents seeking outdoor respite from the pandemic. However, the period of closure allowed a major cleanup and removal of some 20 tons of disused and broken items, plus the installation of a security gate to exclude increasing numbers of trespassers. Close coordination between Guy Scaife and Mariah and an abundance of caution allowed a partial opening in mid-June. By the closing in September the revenues, albeit reduced, had exceeded Guy's target.

The pandemic also took its toll on Town Hall. Liz Horan stepped down to care for her small children indefinitely at home. Guy made the difficult decision to relocate to Iowa to be closer to

family in consideration of his disabled son, since flying was no longer an option. We welcomed Martie Betts who filled two roles, Selectboard Assistant and Assistant Town Clerk.

Town Hall received several upgrades in 2020. The roof was shedding shingles, prompting the installation of a metal roof matching that on the Timothy Frost building. An up-to-date phone system provided instant routing of incoming calls to staff while they worked remotely. The door locks were replaced with 'crash bar' systems that are required for fire safety egress. COVID relief money funded, among other things, a new Town website that allows Town committees to design their own web pages. We thank Martie Betts for taking on the challenge of implementing the new web site.

A significant development was the town wide vote, via mail-in ballot, to approve a bond for up to \$4 million for the long-awaited reclamation and resurfacing of Route 132 from the Tucker Hill Road junction to the Norwich line. The north part of Route 132 to the Strafford line was reclaimed in 2020 with partial funding from the EPA. The town paid for roadside 'grubbing,' guardrails, striping and signage. We will also pay for the final topcoat in 2021.

With Guy's departure Tom Yennerell, former manager of Springfield VT , joined us as interim manager. Tom's input on the budget and town policies has been invaluable.

We extend our sincere thanks to all the residents who volunteer their time to the multiple functions of the Town. Their many contributions help to make Thetford a community.

Respectfully,

Thetford Selectboard

TOWN OF THETFORD BUDGET REPORT

The Selectboard is presenting a budget for the 2021 General Fund, Department of Public Works Fund, and other additional appropriations that will increase the 2021 funds to be raised by 1.9%.

Funds to be raised will increase by 5.87% in the General Fund

Funds to be raised will decrease by 1.26% in the Department of Public Works Fund

Funds to be raised will increase by 1.01% for additional appropriations, if all Articles pass.

At the closing of 2020, the General Fund had a balance of approximately \$162,000. We began 2020 with \$310,000 and budgeted to give \$150,000 of that surplus back to taxpayers. The General Fund balance now is roughly 9.95% of total 2021 budgeted expenditures. To maintain a healthy fund balance, there will be no “give back” this year, which is a contributing factor to the 5.87% increase in funds to be raised in the General Fund.

At the closing of 2020, the Department of Public Works Fund had a balance of approximately **\$244,000**. We began 2020 with \$160,000, but had a budget surplus of **\$60,000**. The Department of Public Works Fund balance is roughly ____% of total 2021 expenditures, which is healthy.

Route 132 Bond Payments

The Town will have to pay \$16,000 in interest on the “up to” \$4 million bond that passed in November for repairs to Route 132. We are, however, raising \$118,000 towards this expense in 2021 so that we can enter 2022 with a \$102,000 surplus. In 2022, the Town will have to make its first full bond payment of roughly \$320,000, however we will only have to increase taxes to be raised by \$100,000 over our 2021 contribution of \$118,000 by applying the \$102,000 surplus. In 2023, we will have to raise the full \$320,000. Having no surplus left to offset the expense, the 2023 increase in taxes to be raised will be another \$100,000.

Other Roads

The surplus in the Department of Public Works would have been \$160,000, however the Selectboard moved \$100,000 into the Paving Fund to help bolster our capacity to address road maintenance and repair needs on roads other than Route 132. The balance of the Paving Fund is _____, and at least one notable project is scheduled in 2021 for Latham Road.

2021 Thetford Town Meeting Warning

The legal voters of the Town of Thetford are hereby warned to meet at Thetford Town Hall in said Town on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 to transact the following business by Australian ballot:

- Article 1 To elect all Town Officers required by law:
- Town Moderator
 - Selectboard member for a term of three years
 - Selectboard member for a term of two years
 - Lister for a term of three years
 - Cemetery Commissioner for a term of three years
 - Cemetery Commissioner for a term of one year to complete a term of three years
 - Trustee of the Public Trusts for a term of three years
- Article 2 Shall the voters authorize payment of real and personal property taxes on Friday, October 15th, 2021 by physical delivery to the tax collector before 5pm on that date?
- Article 3 Shall the town set the penalty charged by the collector of delinquent taxes for payments made after the due date for payment to four percent of the tax for the first fifteen days, and then an additional four percent of the tax for the sixteenth day and thereafter pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1674(3)(B)?
- Article 4 Shall the voters authorize general fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$1,628,543 of which \$1,248,649 shall be raised by taxes and \$379,894 by non-tax revenues?
- Article 5 Shall the voters authorize highway fund expenditures for operating expenses of \$1,409,870 of which \$1,275,470 shall be raised by taxes and \$134,400 by non-tax revenues?
- Article 6 Shall the voters appropriate \$116,190 to the Thetford Library Federation for the purpose of providing library services to the town?
- Article 7 Shall the voters appropriate \$302,410 to the Thetford Volunteer Fire Department for the purpose of providing emergency services to the town and for building capital reserves for the purchase of vehicles and equipment?
- Article 8 Shall the town vote to give the Selectboard general authority to enter into tax stabilization contracts with owners, lessees, bailees, or operators of agricultural or forest property, open space land, and alternative energy generating plants, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2741(b)(1)?

Article 9 Shall the town give the Selectboard general authority to enter into tax stabilization contracts with owners, lessees, bailees, or operators of commercial or industrial property, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2741(b)(1)?

Polls open on Tuesday, March 2, 2020 from 8 am to 7 pm.

Dated this 25th day of January 2020 by the Selectboard of the Town of Thetford.