



# Town of Thetford Vermont

3910 Vermont Route 113 • P.O. Box 126 • Thetford Center, VT 05075  
802-785-2922 • [thetfordvermont.us](http://thetfordvermont.us)

## Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

– Online Only –

Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 7:00pm

**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

Selectboard members present: Sharon Harkay (Chair), Mary Bryant, Li Shen, Steve Tofel

Selectboard members absent: Nick Clark

Others present: Bryan Gazda (Town Manager), Tracy Borst (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Bryan Ruoff (Stantec), Renee LaBranche (Stantec)

Total Zoom attendees: 24

Sharon Harkay called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

### 1. Agenda Review

Sharon Harkay reminded the Selectboard that they had tabled voting on the candidates for the Senior and Affordable Housing Committee and would like to add it in after agenda item #7. There was no objection.

Sharon said she would also like to add an initial discussion about whether to conserve the southern part of the town forest based on a request from the State Agency of Natural Resources. The Selectboard agreed to add it after agenda item #7, before the Senior and Affordable Housing Committee discussion.

### 2. Town Manager Report – Bryan Gazda

Bryan Gazda said he has received 2 letters of resignation from town employees Terre Lefler, Listers' Clerk and Matt Beloin in the Department of Public Works (DPW). Bryan said he would like to request permission to post for the fifth position at the DPW, along with the position that will be open when Matt leaves. This will allow more time for the DPW foreman to focus on his job instead of doing the work of the vacant position.

Bryan will have a meeting with Richard Amore to schedule a public informational meeting about the Village Designation Project. Commercial and non-profit businesses will have an opportunity to benefit from tax benefits.

Bryan said he will be having a conversation with the GMP project manager for the work being done on Academy Road as well as possible work to be done on Five Corners Road for the AT&T cell tower.

Governor Scott has accelerated the Phase 3 opening of the state and the updated information is on the town website. We will be working on the reopening of Town Hall per the guidance of our Emergency Management Director.



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Bryan said that the office has been receiving calls about the construction on Route 5, which is a State project. There is information in the NEWS section of the town website.

Bryan said the closing for the sale of land on Route 244 in Post Mills should be happening by the end of this week.

### 3. Public Comment

No public comment.

### 4. Consideration of Bid Recommendation from Stantec for Route 132 Project

Sharon Harkay said this discussion is to consider and possibly approve the bid recommendation for the Route 132 project, and both Bryan Ruoff and Rene LaBranche from Stantec were at the meeting.

Bryan Ruoff summarized the bid memo from Stantec, (the town's engineering consultant company) which was in the meeting packet. Bryan Ruoff said there were 2 bids received for the reconstruction project on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2 pm. The lower of the 2 bids came from Northwoods Excavating Inc. in the amount of \$3,198,336.18. The remaining bid was from Pike Industries Inc. in the amount of \$4,409,446.25. Bryan explained that they looked at the bids in three different ways, just the base bid, and the base bid with both bid alternatives. In every category Northwoods provided the best option for the town, and Stantec believes it is a favorable company. Stantec's review and recommendation of the bids is to award Northwoods the Base Bid and the Bid Add Alt #B. Bryan Ruoff said test pits will be done to see if any existing materials can be reused.

There was discussion about the test pits.

There was discussion about the price variance of the 2 bids.

Bryan Ruoff said the price includes a topcoat and they hope to have all the work done by the end of 2021.

**Motion** by Sharon Harkay to award the contract for the Route 132 Phase 2 Roadway Reconstruction Project to Northwoods Excavating INC. in the amount of \$3,198,336.18. **VOTE by roll call:** Steve Tofel – in favor, Mary Bryant – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, Sharon Harkay – in favor

**Motion** by Sharon Harkay to allow the Town Manager to sign the contract for Northwoods Excavating INC. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

### 5. Consideration of Bid from Stantec for Route 132 Project Management Services

Rene LaBranche from Stantec explained their proposed scope and fee for construction phase services for the Route 132 reconstruction project. The service fee of \$247,628.00 was previously discussed and included in the \$4,000,000.00 overall project budget. Rene said Stantec designed the project, so they are suggesting that they be the project manager. Rene explained what the services would involve.

**Motion** by Sharon Harkay to approve and accept the Stantec Master Services Agreement for Project Management of the Route 132 Project in the amount of \$247,628.00. **VOTE by roll call;** Mary Bryan – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, Steve Tofel – in favor, Sharon Harkay - in favor.



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## 6. Subdivision Regulations Hearing

Sharon Harkay said this was an opportunity for the Selectboard and the public to ask questions or make comments about the proposed new Subdivision Regulations that the Planning Commission approved on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. David Forbes (Planning Commission Chair), Dean Whitlock, and Tim Taylor, members of the Planning Commission, are at the meeting. The Selectboard needs to approve the regulations no later than December 15<sup>th</sup> of this year.

The Selectboard reviewed, discussed and made some edits:

- Should the board send a notice of appeal by certified mail? The general feeling was there was no reason not to, and certified mail would aid in making sure the notice was received.
- Changes were made concerning who should be noted in various parts of the document, the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Selectboard or Town Manager. David Forbes, chair of the Planning Commission, thought Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission should be contacted for clarification on the responsibilities of the Selectboard and the Town Manager
- The document now belongs to the Selectboard so any typos or minor changes would be their responsibility.
- David Forbes explained that the word “urban” was used because technically speaking, those areas are the closest thing Thetford has to an urban setting. The Selectboard could change it to “municipal” or “village”.
- Some words or phrases were likely lifted right from the Zoning Bylaws.
- The number of driveways allowed on a street vs. road will be checked.
- Li Shen suggested that water safety should be part of the language, such as “a safe and adequate water supply is available”, versus just “an adequate water supply is available”.
- The difference between an individual installing a culvert and the Town installing a culvert was clarified. It was noted that there are several state agencies that oversee subdivision development.
- The “1-year” storm event to control storm water runoff was discussed.
- David Forbes said the lot sizes in the new regulations are the same as in the old.
- It was noted that until the regulations have been passed and are in use, they won’t understand any inconsistencies. If something is discovered that needs to be changed, an amendment can be made.

The Selectboard thanked the members of the Planning Commission for the work done on the Subdivision Regulations and for attending the meeting to answer questions.

Sharon and Li will work on the edits to the document.

## 7. Discussion of Treasure Island

Bryan Gazda said he and the Recreation Coordinator, Amy Fahey have been working with the Treasure Island Exploratory Committee to make sure Treasure Island is in the best condition possible for the summer. There will be a clean-up day on Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Bryan has been working with the plumber to get the water turned on and the septic tank will be cleaned. The DPW has put split rail fencing up around the parking area near the play structure and crushed



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stone will be put down for a better parking surface. Bryan said the struggle has been finding enough lifeguards and a coordinator.

There is only one returning lifeguard from last year. Right now, there are 5 lifeguards, but 4 still need to be trained which will not take place until the first week in June. The planned opening date will be June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Bryan said another challenge has been finding a qualified instructor for swim lessons.

There have been some requests to rent the facility.

As for COVID-19, once the state gets to the 80% vaccinated threshold which is still anticipated around July 4<sup>th</sup>, patrons should be able to attend without masks and social distancing.

Bryan said they have contacted other organizations seeking help with lifeguards, but everyone is struggling to get staff this year. While it is unfortunate to not be able to open for Memorial Day weekend, we are planning on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

## **2 letters of interest for SAHC.**

**Motion** by Mary Bryant to appoint Cathee Clement and Claire Kelsey to the Senior and Affordable Housing Committee. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

Sharon expressed thanks to both women for stepping up, as she knows they are busy, yet they are willing to step up and take on more.

## **Whether or not to conserve the southern part of the town forest.**

Sharon Harkay said the town was contacted by the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) with concerns about the town forest. The town forest is an animal corridor and if the southern part of the forest is conserved it will protect that corridor.

Li Shen said the southern portion of the forest is important to an overall regional corridor as well as a local corridor.

The number of acres was not discussed with ANR.

There was discussion about the impact of any future desire to develop or use that part of the town forest and would a conservation easement limit future Selectboard decisions.

Li Shen said the Public Utilities Commission will be reviewing the whole application for the AT&T tower, and ANR will be part of that review. It's important to consider that part of the process.

This would not impact the Upper Valley Fish & Game Club, or future logging.

Sharon thanked the Selectboard for having a good initial discussion on the idea.

## **8. Warrants & Minutes**

Sharon Harkay said an error had been discovered in the approved minutes of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and it needed to be corrected.

Agenda item #15 "Shall the Selectboard increase the size of the Planning Commission? Plus, possible Planning Commission appointment(s)." Under the item the minutes read "Was action taken? (unsure)". The Selectboard clerk listened to the audio recording and found that action was taken: "Motion by Nick Clark to increase the seats on the Planning Commission to 7. Roll call vote taken, all in favor. Motion by Nick Clark to appoint Michael Snow to the Planning Commission. Roll call vote taken, all in favor."



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**Motion** by Sharon Harkay to amend the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 minutes as discussed. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

**Motion** by Li Shen to accept the regular Selectboard meeting minutes of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, as amended. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

**Motion** by Li Shen to accept the warrants as presented. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**

## 9. Adjourn

**Motion** by Steve Tofel to adjourn the regular Selectboard meeting at 9:25 pm. **VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)**