

Social Service Appropriation Policy Town of Thetford

PURPOSE: Under Vermont law, a town may appropriate such sums of money as it deems necessary for the support of social service programs and agencies that provide services to town residents. 24 V.S.A. § 2691, The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for managing social service agency appropriations that will be voted upon at the Town of Thetford Annual Meeting,

APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to appropriation requests from social services agencies and programs subject to the provisions of Title 24, Chapter 73 of Vermont Statutes Annotated. Such programs include, but are not limited to, transportation, nutrition, childcare, medical care, and other rehabilitative services for persons with low incomes, senior citizens, children, disabled persons, drug and alcohol abusers, and persons requiring employment to eliminate their need for public assistance.

This policy does not apply to town membership organizations such as the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission, or the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District.

PROCEDURE: Any social service organization wishing to have an appropriation request warned by the Selectboard for the Town of Thetford's Annual Meeting to be approved by the voters, shall submit the attached form to the Town Manager *each year* no later than _____. (See attached Social Services Appropriation Request application form.)

Should the Selectboard elect not to warn a given appropriation, the organization may submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642. Such petition must be signed by at least five percent of the voters of the town and filed with the Town Clerk not less than 47 days before the day of the annual meeting. The petition should be in substantially

the following form:

Petition of Legal Voters of the Town of Thetford

We, the undersigned legal voters of the Town of Thetford, hereby petition the Select board to add the following article to the warning for the annual meeting to be held on Thetford's Town Meeting Day.

Shall the Town appropriate \$ *[insert amount of request]* to *[insert name of social service agency]*, for *[insert brief description of the purpose of the proposed appropriation]* in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691?

Print Name

Address

Signature

Pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3)(C), a petition must contain the petition language on every page on which signatures are collected and must contain the printed name, signature, and street address of each voter who signs the petition.

No proposed article may contain any opinion or comment about the subject being voted upon, Petitions submitted after the deadline will not be honored. Petitions submitted prior to the deadline but not containing the required number of signatures shall be returned by the Town Clerk within 24 hours from receipt stating in writing on the petition why it cannot be accepted. Any petition returned to the petitioners may be amended to correct any stated deficiencies and refiled with the Town Clerk not later than 48 hours after the petition was returned by the Clerk, or the filing deadline, whichever is later. However, supplementary petitions shall not be accepted if the original petition did not meet the filing deadline or did not contain the requisite number of signatures.

Those social service agencies that have had an appropriation request approved at the annual town meeting are not required to submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation for the next three years if the amount requested in those years is the same or less than the amount approved by the voters. Three years after the last voter approval they must submit a voter-backed petition in

accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642, even if the agency is not requesting an increased amount.

All social service agencies receiving appropriations under this policy are required to submit a report on the agency's programs no later than 60 days prior to Town Meeting.

Descriptions must be limited to one page and should describe the program or services provided to Town residents. Agency representatives are encouraged to attend Town Meeting to explain the appropriation request to the voters and answer their questions.

Approved social service appropriations will be paid by the Town on the following schedule:

On or near tax due date, currently October 15.

Payment is subject to the availability of funds.

The foregoing policy is hereby adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Thetford, Vermont, this day, _____, and is effective as of this date or until amended or repealed.

_____ Sharon Harkay (Chair)

Mary Bryant
David Goodrich
Li Shen
Steven Tofel