



Town of Thetford Vermont

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

Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes Thetford Town Offices (w/Virtual Attendance Option) Monday, March 20th, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Selectboard members present: Sharon Harkay (Chair), David Goodrich (Vice-Chair), Mary Bryant (7:04 PM), Li Shen, Steve Tofel
Others present: Town Manager Bryan Gazda, Town Clerk/Treasurer Tracy Borst, Dale Lewis
Participating community members: Carol Petrillo

Sharon Harkay called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

1. Agenda Review

Li Shen had an email from Development Review Board Chair, Tim Taylor that she wanted to bring before the Selectboard. It will be put under agenda item #4. Li also has a draft Conservation Easement that she can send to the Selectboard for their review.

2. Notes from the Selectboard Chair

- Postponing Town Meetings

Sharon said she has heard from a few residents about Town Meeting not being postponed due to weather. Sharon spoke with the Town Clerk from Lyme NH, because Sharon had noticed in the newspaper that several NH towns were able to automatically postpone their meetings. Sharon wanted to know how they were able to do that, how far in advance did they had to set up the alternate date, and how did they inform their residents. Sharon also contacted representatives Rebecca Holcombe and Jim Masland to ask them if they would be willing to get a bill in Vermont that would be like the NH bill which allows towns to automatically postpone the meeting if their town is under a weather warning to a date that had been previously selected. Sharon said she also spoke with David Goodrich who is going to be the representative on the committee working on the emergency plan and she has asked David to check in with the committee to see if we could use reverse 911 or another system that could be used that doesn't rely solely on the internet.

3. Town Manager Report – Bryan Gazda

- Thetford – Lyme Bridge Detour Route Map

Bryan shared maps from NH DOT that detailed the plan for the detour while the bridge was closed.

- Tire Damage Update

Bryan said the people who submitted damage reports had validity in their requests to be paid. While he still has to calculate the final cost, he felt they should be paid 100% of their cost to replace the tires. Checks will not be mailed out without signatures on a general release form. Bryan wanted the Selectboard to know that they might start seeing the bills come through the warrants. Carole Petrillo asked if the general release forms would be able to be submitted online. Bryan said that would be an option.



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- **Town Hall HVAC Project Start Update**

Work is scheduled to start next Monday, March 27th. Staff will have the opportunity on Wednesday to ask questions of Gary Moore from EEI about closures and the timeline.

4. Committee/Commission Liaison Reports

Li Shen had received a message from Tim Taylor, saying that Jessie Anderson has chosen not to continue on the Development Review Board and asking about the process the Selectboard uses to appoint members.

Sharon said the usual process is to encourage committees and commissions to recruit on their own. An announcement can be put on the website and listserv. The candidate should go to meetings and if all agree that it's a good fit, the interested person should write a letter of interest to the Selectboard and the committee/commission chair needs to write to Selectboard in support of the candidate.

David Goodrich said he is the liaison to the Development Review Board, and he would send Tim an email with the process.

5. Public Comment

No public comment.

6. Possible Special Selectboard Meeting for Presentation by Chris Brimmer, Fairlee Zoning Administrator

Sharon spoke with Chris Brimmer, and he will come and give an overview of all the different studies they have had done in the last 8-10 years, then give a recommendation for how he thinks Thetford should proceed. He is not available on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, so a special meeting is tentatively set for April 10th. Selectboard members indicated that they would be available.

7. Discussion of a New Charge for the Treasure Island Committee

Selectboard members sent their ideas to Sharon who printed copies for the members present. Sharon read the ideas so all in attendance could hear them.

The Selectboard reviewed the document.

There was discussion about whether the ideas should be sent to the committee for their input. Sharon will make the changes discussed and then forward to the Treasure Island Committee for their review. Sharon noted that the committee will be discussing the stewardship plan at their next meeting on April 19th.

8. Discussion of the Agricultural Tax Stabilization Agreement DRAFT Policy

Sharon said the document in the packet was sent from the town attorney, and she wouldn't change anything about it.

Li Shen agreed.

Mary Bryant said she disagreed with the section on applicant eligibility. Farming is especially hard to start up and we really need more farming with climate change. Mary said she would like eligibility to be one person in the family, based on their income.



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Sharon pointed out that the Selectboard can apply a waiver.

There was a brief discussion about Current Use.

Mary said she wanted this to be really accurate and wondered if it should go out to those who have experience with farm finances and can give the Selectboard feedback on how this tax stabilization will impact potential new farmers.

Sharon Harkay will contact the town attorney with their questions.

9. Convening of the Local Liquor Control Board

Motion by Sharon Harkay to suspend the Selectboard meeting at 8:03 PM to convene a meeting of the Local Liquor Control Board. All in favor, **motion passed**.

Sharon clarified that with the change in process, the new owner of Wings has a current license that will be valid through this November.

Motion by Li Shen to grant the second-class liquor license to Ankit Patel, doing business as AR General Store Corp., for the Baker's Store location. All in favor, **motion passed**.

Motion by Sharon Harkay to adjourn the Local Liquor Control Board at 8:06 PM and reconvene the Selectboard meeting. All in favor, **motion passed**.

10. Warrants and Minutes

#4.3 \$3,044.46

#5.2 \$24,404.07

#10.1 \$105,082.92

Motion by Mary Bryant to accept the warrants as signed. Vote (4-0-1) Steve Tofel abstained; **motion passed**.

Motion by David Goodrich to accept the Selectboard meeting minutes of March 13th, as edited. All in favor, **motion passed**.

11. Possible Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1) and Personnel Matters per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3).

Motion by Sharon Harkay that premature general public knowledge of certain subjects in contract negotiations would place the public or person at a substantial disadvantage, and therefore Sharon Harkay made a **motion** to enter into Executive Session first to discuss contract negotiations per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1), and second to discuss personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) and to invite the town manager to the first part of the executive session. All in favor, **motion passed**. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:14 PM.

Motion by Sharon Harkay to exit executive session at 9:18 PM. All in favor, **motion passed**.

Motion By Sharon Harkay to ratify the Department of Public Works Memorandum of Understanding as presented by Town Manager Bryan Gazda. All in favor, **motion passed**.

Motion by Sharon Harkay to re-appoint Liz Ryan Cole to the Planning Commission with a term ending in 2026. All in favor, **motion passed**.

12. Adjourn



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Motion by Steve Tofel to adjourn the regular Selectboard meeting at 9:19 PM. All in favor,
motion passed.