



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, June 19, 2023 7:00 PM

Selectboard members present: Chair Sharon Harkay, Vice-Chair David Goodrich, Mary Bryant, Li Shen, Steve Tofel

Others present: Interim Town Manager Tom Yennerell, Incoming Town Manager Brian Story, Selectboard assistant Martie Betts

Participating community members: Tammy Hazlett

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

1. Agenda Review

Sharon said they could eliminate item #5 because she is going to roll it into her notes from the Selectboard Chair. Steve said that he and Mary would like to postpone the item on the Social Worker until the meeting on August 7th.

2. Notes from the Selectboard Chair

Sharon said there are currently 2 town managers at Town Hall, interim town manager Tom Yennerell, and the incoming town manager Brian Story who comes from Johnson VT. Today is Brian Story's first day as town manager.

Sharon said on behalf of the Selectboard they would like to thank Tom for coming in as the interim town manager.

Sharon wanted to remind people that Route 113 will be closed on July 8th and 9th for culvert work starting at the Route 244 junction.

3. Town Manager Report – Tom Yennerell

Tom said the owner of the building on Houghton Hill Road will have a contract to demolish the building and Tom has given him until the 24th of June to provide proof. If it's not provided, there is a signed contract between the town and an engineer who will look at the property. Brian Story has been made aware of the situation.

Tom said the delinquent tax agreements made to date, except for one, have been met. A letter has been sent to that property owner that states their property will be added to the tax sales when they resume.

There are 5 heat pump split units that are now running. Tom authorized Alliance to do a temporary adjustment to the electric panel to get the units running. The panel needs a part to allow it to run all units.

There was discussion about how the heat pumps would be situated on gravel versus the original agreement which called concrete pad and the plan for maintenance in the winter.



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4. Public Comment

Tammy Hazlett noticed that ARPA funding is on the agenda and wondered if her group should request time on a future agenda. Sharon said this could be discussed during the agenda item today.

~~5. Introduction of the New Town Manager~~

6. Possible Appointment to the Development Review Board

Motion by Steve Tofel to appoint Sue Howard to the Development Review Board for a 3-year term ending in 2026. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0), **motion carried**.

7. Revisit Mowing Frequency on Town Properties

The Selectboard discussed the town properties that have been mowed less frequently and the individual conversations they have had with the owner of the mowing company. The Selectboard will revisit the discussion.

Sharon Harkay said she appreciated the flowers that Missy Krzal has provided and been caring for at Town Hall.

8. Paving Bid Review and Possible Acceptance

Tom had a synopsis of the bids received for paving Academy Road and recommended that the Selectboard make sure Blaktop could do the job and authorize up to \$350,780.00. This would give some flexibility to Blaktop to ensure that they meet the standards for the paving.

Seth Ames from Blaktop was at the meeting and answered Selectboard questions.

Motion by David Goodrich to authorize up to \$350,780.00 to complete the paving project on Academy Road per specifications, from Route 113 to the Norwich Town Line. VOTE by Roll Call; Mary Bryant – in favor, Steve Tofel – in favor, Sharon Harkay – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, David Goodrich – in favor. **Motion carried**.

9. Consideration of ARPA Funding Short List

Sharon said that her idea was to discuss what things would be top priority, given the results of the survey, and put them on a list. Then they can decide how to spend the remaining money. It's been a while since the results were reviewed. When people answered the first several questions they answered as if there was no financial limit, then question #20 asked people to prioritize their top three. That's how the list was generated. Childcare is tied in 10th place out of 15 ideas. One of the top 5 priorities was to improve the physical facilities at Treasure Island. Sharon would like to find out how much it will cost to remove the asbestos from the caretaker's house and use some ARPA funds to do that.

There was discussion about the decision to keep the house, and what uses it could have. Steve Tofel said he and Bryan Gazda attended some meetings and learned about other opportunities for money. He believes they should leverage as much ARPA money as necessary to find grants and match grants. If they spend some money, they might be able to get more money. Steve thinks they should come back to this discussion.

There was a discussion about the Town Garage. Sharon thought the capacity study should be done first, and then if there is land, they could work on a plan. She thinks there could be



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maintenance work done to the garage and the Timothy Frost building before money is spent on a new facility.

Steve pointed out that town facilities like garages almost certainly have grant money available from the state and maybe even federal money.

Mary Bryant agreed that the capacity study should be done first and added that there are some things that she would take off the list. There are things that might get funding through other sources such as grants or grant matches, community funding, the Poor Family Trust and the Byrne Foundation. She would like to make the ARPA money stretch as far as it can.

Brian Story said that in his experience foundations like the Byrne Foundation are involved with non-profits, not municipalities. Brian suggested getting advice about matching our funds with available grants. He will look at the results of the survey and see what kinds of grants might be available. Brian said that he could give an update at the July 17th meeting.

Li asked if an architectural study for the Timothy Frost building had ever been done.

Tom said there was a proposal, but it hadn't been signed. He signed it and they started the work by looking at structural integrity. Now they are looking at wastewater, ADA, fire exits etc. A big concern is the plaster ceiling, which is in danger of falling.

Steve said a certain amount of ARPA money could also be set aside for smaller projects. The library could use money for their lift, and the Cemetery Commission needs to do work on a wrought iron fence.

Li said they could put out a call for small projects.

Sharon said they have talked about creating mini grants before.

Brian said he would connect with Tammie Hazlett concerning the childcare proposal. Tammie gave a quick outline of what the proposal consisted of. She also said the state legislature may override the Governor's veto of funding for childcare, which would help.

10. Selectboard Liaison Report (Treasure Island Committee)

Sharon said the completed stewardship plan has been received from Lisa Niccolai and should be put on an agenda for discussion. The Selectboard agreed to put it on the July 10th agenda.

The wetlands delineation report is also complete, and Sharon will forward it to the Selectboard.

Sharon said the committee is very hard working but tends to move into programming ideas which are not part of their charge. The ideas are good but should be forwarded to the Town Manager and Recreation Coordinator. The focus should be on a multi-year action plan.

Dale Gephart, a member of the committee, said that there are environmental concerns that should be posted for the town to see, and they are working on a 3-part management plan covering environmental, financial, and recreational aspects. He will convey Sharon's thoughts to the committee when they meet on Wednesday.

11. Warrants and Minutes

- #13.2 \$17,700.49
- #24.1 \$141,536.32
- #14.2 \$9,990.85
- #12.4 \$19,264.76
- #12.3 \$1,525.73



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Motion by Li Shen to approve warrants as presented. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0), **motion carried**.

Motion by David Goodrich to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of June 5th, 2023 as amended. VOTE: (4-0-1), **motion carried**.

12. Adjourn

Motion by Steve Tofel to adjourn the regular Selectboard meeting at 8:49 PM. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0), **motion carried**.