



# Town of Thetford Vermont

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## **Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes Thetford Town Offices (w/Virtual Attendance Option) Monday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 7:00 PM**

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

Others present: Town Manager Brian Story, Town Clerk/Treasurer Tracy Borst, Police Chief Mike Scruggs

Sharon Harkay called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

### **1. Agenda Review**

Sharon said there were two votes during the last meeting that needed to be re-done, as the votes were not unanimous which meant there should have been a roll call vote. The Selectboard agreed to add the re-votes after public comment.

Steve Tofel wondered if there would be an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW) Foreman about the driveway permit in question at the last meeting.

### **2. Notes from the Selectboard Chair**

Sharon had no notes, but later added that special budget meetings will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. Town Manager Report – Brian Story**

Brian said Chief Mike Scruggs held a Drug Take-Back Day at the Transfer Station on Saturday, which went well. Chief Scruggs, along with the DPW Crew, assisted Thetford Elementary School with an emergency drill. The drill was part of the school's emergency protocol, so Brian didn't know how it impacted the children, but the town employees helped with directing traffic and reassembling after evacuation. The location was Camp Farnsworth. Questions were asked about the process, but Brian explained it was disaster planning for the school and he didn't have details about the process.

Brian said winter preparation for the DPW is going well. Equipment has been installed on the trucks, the trucks have been undercoated, and sand and salt has been delivered. The crew also had time to work on smoothing the shoulders on Academy Road. The winter schedule of 5 – 8-hour days will begin on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Brian will follow up with Dale about the driveway permit.

Sharon asked about the records retention project. Brian said he hasn't had much time to work on that, but will touch base with Tracy, who has created a retention schedule for her office.

### **4. Public Comment**

No public comment.

## **5. Addition; Re-votes**

**Motion** by David Goodrich that the 2023 Selectboard stipends will be paid on a pro-rated basis with Mary Bryant and David Forbes getting their appropriate shares. VOTE by roll call: Steve Tofel – in favor, David Goodrich – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, Sharon Harkay – abstained, David Forbes – in favor. **Motion carried.**

**Motion** by David Forbes to accept the Selectboard meeting minutes of October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, as revised. VOTE by roll call: David Forbes – in favor, Steve Tofel – in favor, David Goodrich – in favor, Li Shen – abstain, Sharon Harkay – abstain. **Motion carried.**

## **6. Possible Appointment of Stacey Cooper to the Thetford Conservation Commission**

Stacey Cooper sent an email to the Selectboard and Conservation Commission expressing an interest in filling the vacancy created when Sue Tallman resigned, ending in 2025.

**Motion** by Sharon Harkay to appoint Stacy Cooper to the vacant seat on the Conservation Commission which has a term ending in 2025. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.** Sharon extended thanks to Stacey for being willing to join the Commission.

## **7. Schedule the Public Hearing on the Interim Bylaw and Housing Consortium Work**

David Forbes said the Planning Commission held a public forum on October 17<sup>th</sup> and now there will be a public hearing with the Planning Commission, which is scheduled for Tuesday night, November 7<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be at Town Hall with a Zoom option. There was a brief explanation of a public forum versus a public hearing. Once these two meetings take place all documents go to the Selectboard for review and approval. Sharon wanted the public to know that they are following the process that is required by law.

The Selectboard hearing will be set on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> during the normal Selectboard meeting time.

## **8. Possible Approval of Vermont Municipal Employee Retirement System (VMERS) Enrollment Language for Chief Scruggs's Contact**

**Motion** by Sharon Harkay that the Town of Thetford wishes to enroll Police Chief Michael Scruggs in the VMERS Group C plan effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and further that any Police Chief hired after the date of this vote will automatically be enrolled in the Group C plan effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

## **9. Fill Out Survey re: Potential Route 5 Bike Corridor**

Sharon Harkay and the Selectboard assistant logged into the online survey. The survey was available for the public to view as the Selectboard discussed and agreed on answers.

Sharon and the Selectboard assistant entered the answers and Sharon submitted the survey.

## **10. Discuss and Possibly Approve the Town's Share of Health Care Premiums for Employees**

Brian informed the Selectboard that they are not required to vote on health care premiums tonight.

An appointment has been made for employees to meet virtually with a representative between this Selectboard meeting and the next one and it would be helpful for employees to know the Selectboard decision before that meeting.

There was discussion about the gradual percentage decrease decided on by a past Selectboard, and the decision to not follow that recently. There was discussion about what the union employees receive versus the non-union employees.

There was discussion about when salary would be discussed and should that happen before deciding health benefits.

Brian said it would be advantageous for the town to have all employees, union and non-union at the same level.

Brian will gather more information and the Selectboard will discuss this again.

### **11. Warrants and Minutes**

#40.1 \$16,348.92

#21.4 \$20,318.84

#22.2 \$320,941.35

#22.4 \$28,822.51

#21.3 \$3,697.80

#41.1 \$30,668.85

#22.3 \$600.97

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

**Motion carried.**

**Motion** by David Forbes to accept the minutes for October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, as edited. VOTE by Roll Call: David Forbes – in favor, Steve Tofel – in favor, David Goodrich – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, Sharon Harkay – abstained. Motion carried.

### **12. Anticipated Executive Session Regarding Police Contract Negotiations (NEPBA) per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B)**

Sharon Harkay at 8:33 PM, **moved** to find that premature public discussion of the subject about to be addressed might cause the public body or other person involved to suffer a substantial disadvantage, therefore Sharon made a **Motion** to enter into Executive Session to continue discussing the Police Contract Negotiations and to invite the Town Manager into the discussion. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). Motion carried.

The Selectboard exited Executive Session at 9:27 PM.

No action was taken.

### **13. Adjourn**

**Motion** by Steve Tofel to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:28 PM. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). Motion carried.