



Town of Thetford Vermont

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Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes Thetford Town Offices (w/Virtual Attendance Option) Monday, November 20th, 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, Listers Sean Boyce and Barbara Harrington, Selectboard Assistant Martie Betts

Participating community members: Doug Tiff (Treasure Island Committee member), David Roth (Treasure Island Committee chair)

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

1. Agenda Review

There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Notes from the Selectboard Chair

The Selectboard received an email from Jim Zien who will be stepping down from the Treasure Island Committee. Due to other commitments, Jim was finding it impossible to attend the meetings. Sharon thanked Jim for his years of service. The Selectboard would now like to find someone to fill his term, ending in March of 2025.

Sharon said the dates for the January Selectboard meetings will need to move from the 1st and 3rd Mondays to the 2nd and 4th Mondays due to holidays. The dates will be January 8th and 22nd.

3. Town Manager Report

Brian thanked the Thetford Elder Network for hosting Brian and the Listers at their last luncheon. Brian was able to introduce himself and talk a little about appraisal. If any other local resident groups want Brian to come for the same presentation or just want to meet, he would be happy to attend.

Brian said they will be securing a new arrangement for food waste at the Transfer Station, but there should be no impact to the customers. The people currently taking the compost do not want the volume that we have.

Brian said the staff Holiday event will be on December 20th and the Selectboard usually donates. This year the event will be a potluck so Brian asked the Selectboard to donate funds for a staff gift instead of food.

4. Public Comment

No public comment.

5. Presentation by the Listers About the Status of the Town-Wide Reappraisal, 30 Minutes with Questions and Answers

Sharon introduced Listers Barbara Harrington and Sean Boyce, who were at the meeting to give a status update on the upcoming town wide reappraisal.

Barbara Harrington explained the kind of work that was being done in the office to update and be prepared for the reappraisal.

The contract for the reappraisal is in place which allowed the Listers to submit the first form required by the state.

The Listers will be working on updating their webpage on the town's website and a postcard mailing will be done informing people of when the Listers will be in the area.

Sean Boyce talked about the process for appraising a house and the options available should someone not want to allow the Listers on their property.

There was discussion about the use of the 2012 cost table.

The Listers explained how the state will test their work to make sure it is as accurate as possible. The Selectboard will be updated as the process moves along.

6. Reset the Date of the Public Hearing on the Interim Bylaw and Housing Consortium Work (January 8th is the preferred date)

The Selectboard had set a date for the zoning hearing for December 4th, but the Planning Commission would like more time due to public comment and questions at their last meeting.

Motion by Steve Tofel that the public hearing on the Interim Bylaw and Housing Consortium be scheduled for the January 8th Selectboard meeting. VOTE by Roll Call: Steve Tofel – in favor, Li Shen – in favor, Sharon Harkay – in favor, David Goodrich – in favor, David Forbes – abstain. **Motion carried.**

7. Discuss and Possibly Approve the Treasure Island Master Plan as Put Forward by the Treasure Island Committee

Sharon noted that 3 of the Treasure Island Committee members were present via Zoom and 2 were present in the meeting room. She asked the committee members if they wanted to highlight specific items that they would like to see in the upcoming budget.

Doug Tifft gave an overview of the process for compiling the plan, including many things that were developed along the way. While there is a long-range plan, it is meant to be tackled in short term buckets. Doug suggested that perhaps once a year, in the fall, the committee could meet with the town manager and recreation director to look at items that could be tackled in the upcoming year. Doug also wondered if the committee could be given authority to organize things like cleaning days and fundraising events.

David Roth would like an accurate survey and resources compiled for easy access.

Doug said that they would like to make use of things that already exist, and the first year or two could be restoring some of the recreation options that used to be available. Doug also suggested that a map of Treasure Island that includes more than just the beach area be created.

David Roth said the goal of tonight was for the Selectboard to determine if the overall plan

makes sense and not to discuss funding.

Li said she appreciated all the work that went into the plan, but it reads like a compilation of lists. She would like to see an introduction, and incorporation of the same management units that Lisa Niccolai in the Treasure Island Stewardship Plan with management goals for each unit.

Sharon disagreed, saying she liked the way the plan is laid out in years. She would like Brian to look at the items, determine the priorities and what the cost would be.

Brian said he will follow the board's direction and meet with the Treasure Island Committee.

8. Discuss Elements to be Included in the Proposed Capacity Study

Brian told the board this should happen relatively soon especially as there are holidays to consider. He is meeting with a consultant who may make recommendations.

There are two options: a water study and a general capacity study. The capacity study could benefit by being informed by water study or the water study could be informed by the capacity study by determining where there is room for growth. Brian believed the town would not be served by doing both studies at one time.

There was discussion about the details and amount of information the RFP would require. There was discussion about studies done by other towns.

Brian will draw up and incorporate information from Sharon and when it's ready for publication Brian will adjust the due date.

9. Warrants and Minutes

#23.2 \$13,196.86

#23.3 \$ 977.87

#23.4 \$20,879.52

#43.1 \$19,571.84

#24.3 \$ 1,500.00

#44.1 \$16,697.41

Motion by David Goodrich to accept the warrants as presented. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

Motion by David Forbes to accept the November 6th, 2023 minutes as presented. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

10. Anticipated Executive Session Concerning the Changes in the New England Police Benevolent Association Contract as well as the Town's 2024 Share of Health Care Premiums and Employee Compensation per 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)

Motion by Sharon Harkay to enter Executive Session to discuss the changes in the New England Police Benevolent Association Contract, as well as the Town's 2024 Share of Health care premiums and employee compensation per 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1), and to invite Town Manager Brian Story. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

The Selectboard returned to open meeting at 10:48 PM.

Motion by Sharon Harkay that the Selectboard sign the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town and the New England Police Benevolent Association, Local #403,

which changes the contract previously negotiated in terms of some pay changes and in 2 different areas: additional incentives and in the wages. Brian Story added that it also

changed the retirement and eliminated Appendix B from the contract. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

Motion by Sharon Harkay to set the health care rate for non-union employees for 2024 so that the town pays 86% of the health care premium based on the Blue Cross/Blue Shield platinum plan and non-union employees will then pay 14%.

Sharon explained that the goal is to return to an agreement that was first established by the Selectboard in 2018 in which the town would pay 2 ½% less of the premium every year so that by 2023 the employees would be paying 15%. For this year, the employees will pay 14%. The other reason is that the Selectboard will be moving toward having the Police contract, the Department of Public Works contract and the non-union employees all paying on the same schedule for how much the town pays versus what the employees pay for the health care premium.

VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**

11. Adjourn

Motion by Steve Tofel to adjourn the meeting at 10:52 PM. VOTE: All in favor (5-0-0). **Motion carried.**