

**TOWN OF THOMASTON  
MINUTES  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2013**

**1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman Lee-Ann Upham called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM in the Watts Hall Selectmen Meeting Room. Present were Bill Hahn, Peter Lammert, Jonathan Eaton, Greg Hamlin, Town Manager Valmore Blastow, Jr., Recording Secretary Louise Demers.

Members of the public: Christopher and Davene Fahy, Carmen Lavertu, Janet Benner, Rev. Peter Jenks, Susan Foley, Julie Russo, State Representative Chuck Kruger.

**5. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

**A. To discuss a request from Julie Russo in regards to having a carnival at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities conditioned on Insurance Certificate and Indemnity to be reviewed by M.M.A.**

Julie Russo brought forth a proposal to have carnival people during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. The carnival would be open Tuesday through Saturday with carnival rides like Ferris Wheel, Merry Go Round, Fun House, and a few food vendors. These would be located on the ballfield by Lura Libby School. The carnival would be open evenings and all day on July 4<sup>th</sup>, and opening at noon on Saturday. The carnival people guaranteed to leave the ballfield as they found it when they arrived. They carry a lot of insurance.

Valmore Blastow said after Julie Russo made the request to his Office, he contacted MMA, and Susan Canton said the Certificate of Insurance from the carnival company should be sufficient. The indemnity section should be read very carefully to be sure there is adequate coverage. She volunteered to read any document that the Town is required to sign. The Town of Thomaston needs to be named as an additional insured.

Davene Fahy asked if the Thomaston 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee will benefit. Julie Russo said a percentage of ticket sales, approximately \$1,500 will go to the Committee. We shouldn't have to pay out anything for them, and they will provide their own people to work.

**Motion: Jonathan Eaton to approve the request from Julie Russo in regards to having a carnival at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities conditioned on Insurance Certificate and Indemnity to be reviewed by M.M.A, and the Town of Thomaston named as an additional insured. Bill Hahn seconded.**

**VOTE: 5 for – 0 opposed.**

Bill Hahn asked if the Committee could get the Hope elephants. Julie Russo said she contacted the owner, but he is not interested in getting the elephants out.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Review the request of Alex Grierson to be a recipient of the Dietz Scholarship. He is pursuing a career in an Animal Science related field.**

Valmore Blastow said Alex Grierson's GPA is 3.33. Typically, \$2,000 is awarded from the Dietz Fund which has a balance of \$69,000.

**Motion: Peter Lammert to award the Dietz Scholarship in the amount of \$2,000 to Alex Grierson who is pursuing a career in an Animal Science related field. Greg Hamlin seconded.**

**VOTE: 5 for – 0 opposed.**

**B. Review the request of Thomaston citizens for a Resolution to the Maine Legislature and US Congressional Delegation in response to a petition signed by 292 voters on November 6, 2012 addressed to Lawmakers.**

Peter Lammert said he had no idea what this is about. He Googled for more information. Where was he on January 20, 2010 that he was not cognizant of this?

Reverend Peter Jenks presented the petition signed by 292 voters on November 6, 2012 *"requesting our Select Board/Town Counsel to pass a resolution to overturn 'Citizens United v. FEC' (2010) such as 'Shall the town vote to ask the Maine Legislature and Maine's congressional delegation to support a US Constitutional amendment that states that money is not speech and that corporations are not persons under the US Constitution.'"*

Rev. Jenks said when he voted at the polls he knew that his vote wasn't going to sway the election, but he still voted. He doesn't think the Town Resolution only will change what has been happening, but it can make a difference. Elections are being run by big money. We all experienced high telephone and mail canvassing to influence the outcome of the election. He provided wording for a Town resolution, but it is up to the Board.

Greg Hamlin agreed with Peter Lammert, this slipped on us, and reinforces "give us the best politicians money can buy". His concern is the Board is being asked to be a political activist. He personally would sign it.

Lee-Ann Upham added because we sit as Selectmen and representatives of the Town, she has tried to avoid taking sides. In this case, she would have no problem signing it. Bill Hahn also agreed.

Jonathan Eaton said we are an elected Board and we don't deal with partisan issues, but we can take a stand. He was ready to support it, but the wording in the Resolution is unclear.

Lee-Ann Upham asked if the verbiage is the same around the state. Carmen Lavertu said 26 towns have signed, but the wording is different. We didn't ask for party affiliation in the petition. It would be good to go out to the community in a bipartisan way to encourage citizens to engage in public discourse. How do we do it?

Peter Lammert continued with his concerns. He read about Citizens United. If he goes for this, he may be upsetting someone in the Town who liked the endless calls and mail. He is unclear of the wording, starting with Lawmakers. Who are they? It's not specific. Did the signers sign what is being asked tonight?

Carmen Lavertu said people were asked to sign two different petitions, so there might be some discrepancies with the names.

Peter Lammert questioned the wording "the damage incurred to the Maine Clean Elections Act".

Representative Chuck Kruger explained the matching funds aspect of Maine Clean Election Act was struck down in an Arizona decision. It is essentially the same language. In 2012 candidates for Maine Clean Election Act did not get funding. He is asking to reverse the effect of Citizens United. There are two or three bills in the Legislature seeking to address the issue. It is a grassroots effort to amend Citizens United.

Greg Hamlin questioned if a Constitutional amendment was the only way. Carmen Lavertu said Citizens United has to be addressed as a Supreme Court decision.

**Motion: Jonathan Eaton to pass a Resolution as stated from the petitions "*The Town of Thomaston Select Board requests the Maine Legislature and US Congressional Delegation to consider a constitutional amendment reversing rulings that equate corporations and unions with persons and tread money as free speech. In addition to his long-term reform, we ask for immediate legislation establishing rules of disclosure and appropriations toward the public financing of elections*". Bill Hahn seconded.**

**VOTE: 5 for – 0 opposed.**

Carmen Lavertu asked that we forward the Resolution to our four representatives, a copy for her to give to the State Elections Board, Maine Legislature, Minority and Majority Leaders of both parties.

**C. Discuss the engagement of CSD Engineers to analyze the brick repairs on the east wall of Watts Hall with an estimated cost of \$1,200, as well as to review the condition of Fire Station brick.**

Valmore Blastow explained this came out of last year's Town Meeting and voter approved \$35,000 to repair the east wall of Watts Hall. He also pointed out that MMA Risk Management Inspection identified necessary brick repairs at the Fire Station which Bill Hahn had reviewed with Randy Scamfer and should be evaluated, as well as asbestos in the basement of the Police Station at Watts Hall.

Bill Hahn said he had an evaluation done three years ago, and a bulge in the wall was identified. Openings cut into the walls on the inside would allow scoping to the outside.

Peter Lammert identified the damage at the Fire Station as in an area of previously made changes.

Jonathan Eaton clarified that Randy Scamfer of Civil & Structural Design would define the work to be done before it goes to bid.

Peter Lammert said there were questions addressed regarding the use of Watts Hall during this work. People should refer to the time when other major work was done.

**Motion: Greg Hamlin to approve the engagement of CSD Engineers to analyze the brick repairs on the east wall of Watts Hall with an estimated cost of \$1,200, as well as to review the condition of the Fire Station brick and the asbestos in the Police Station basement. Jonathan Eaton seconded.**

**VOTE: 5 for – 0 opposed.**

## **6. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. Valmore Blastow will meet with Tobin Malone and the new Director Mr. Lowell of Montpelier tomorrow at 2:00 PM at their request.
2. There will be a meeting on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM at the School Superintendent's Office located at the old McLain School to discuss response to schools and safety.
3. The Maine Downtown Center program is February 5<sup>th</sup> beginning at 3:00 PM for a walk, dinner at 5:00 PM and a meeting at 6:30 PM at Watts Hall.
4. Valmore Blastow wrote an article for the newsletter regarding the Governor's proposal and impacts of shifting \$424 million onto the local taxpayers for 2014-2015. Ten years ago the Commissioner of Financial Services stated in a meeting he attended that the State would be required to cut every department by 20% for 20 years to balance the State budget if education and DHHS were not controlled or reduced. Funding for education has already been reduced by \$622,000 since 2007-2008. Because we consolidated the schools and shifts in the formula, the Town has not felt the brunt of that reduction. State Revenue Sharing has been reduced from

\$483,000 in 2007-2008 to the current \$229,000 which now is being proposed to be eliminated. This is a definitive sign of the state of the economy as the original reduction is based on a formula. For example, \$100 billion in sales 2007-2008 taxed a 5% generates \$5 billion in receipts to the State. The municipalities receive 5% of the 5% which is \$250 million. Therefore, compare \$483,000 at \$250 million, the current \$229,000 would approximately \$125 million or only \$50 billion in sales. The current proposal is to eliminate the relationship with municipalities for any State Revenue Sharing.

#### **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **4. APPROVE THE WARRANTS**

**Motion: Peter Lammert to approve the warrants as signed. Bill Hahn seconded.**

**VOTE: 4 for – 0 opposed – 1 abstained (Hamlin).**

#### **3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2013 MEETING.**

**Motion: Jonathan Eaton to approve the minutes of the Monday, January 14, 2013 meeting. Bill Hahn seconded.**

**VOTE: 4 for – 0 opposed – 1 abstained (Hamlin).**

#### **11. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

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Louise Demers, Recording Secretary

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Lee-Ann Upham, Chairman