

# TOWN OF THORNTON

## December 27, 2007

### Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

9:00 AM The meeting was called to order.  
Board members present: Arthur Gross and Roy Sabourn  
Also present: Administrator Andrew (TA), Jim Demeritt, Road Agent (RA) Tom Dubey

Selectman Gross inquired if there is still enough money in the budget to purchase the server computer. The TA will verify but thinks so. It was moved to purchase the server from the 2007 budget. APPROVED (x2)

Selectman Sabourn questioned one of the proposed zoning changes relative to setbacks and whether it is needed or should it be part of the building permit process that the property owner has to sign. Then it would be part of the Building Inspector's job to verify the setback. Mr. Demeritt responded that there was to be one more meeting at which the proposed zoning change could be discussed. It was suggested that locally produced products be better defined. Mr. Demeritt responded that the Planning Board's attorney suggested the wording for the article. The wording can not interfere with interstate commerce. There was also discussion relative to generating energy from wind.

Selectman Sabourn stated that the selectmen would have to deny a building permit application for a windmill at this point due to zoning ordinance structure height requirements.

RA Dubey copied the board the load bearing information for the highway garage office space that was calculated by Jim Ingram. The information was copied to the TA for the file. A letter of thanks will be sent to Mr. Ingram.

Covered Bridge – The RA left a message for engineer, Lisa Martin requesting a site visit. He asked if it was the boards request that he use her information for a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion. No. Selectman Sabourn suggested that the town pays her to do a site visit to explain what can be done-options. A second opinion might be sought if we are talking investing a huge amount of money. We are looking for a ball park figure for a warrant article. Selectman Gross agreed.

The RA reported a truck had been damaged from hitting the loading dock. The truck is operable and a police incident report was completed by Lt. Foley. The RA has two estimates for repairs: Mike Benton \$1782.50 (it can be done in a day with notice); and Thornton Collision \$2,342.32 (no time). It was moved to accept Mike Benton's repair estimate. APPROVED (x2)

The RA reported that in the same storm some highway garage door panels were damaged when parking the trucks in the garage. It has been reported to the insurance company. Spotters are now utilized when parking equipment. Overhead Door Company of Concord installed the doors and has given an estimate of \$2,895. The board discussed whether to get additional quotes. It was moved to have Overhead Door Company of Concord repair/replace the damaged panels. APPROVED (x2)

The RA noted that there has been a storm every three days since Thanksgiving. It looks like the winter subcontractors line and the bottom line of the budget will be over at end of year. The board agreed to revisit the 2008 budget proposal after the final numbers are in. The RA stated that the crew had worked about 135 hours in the last two weeks.

9:50 Police budget proposal - Chief Joyce presented his budget request without changing the wage lines as was requested. Selectman Gross inquired if the department is fully staffed at this time. YES. The Chief noted the only change in wage lines is for the Administrative Assistant (AA) position due to the staff change. He stated that Terry had been with the Police Department for 20 years.

Dispatch cost is up \$532. The AA answers the phone during the workday which helps keep the costs down. Mr. Demeritt inquired if costs will go down with having a full time assistant again. The Chief responded that he may adjust the line for next year, or hopefully hold steady, due to the fact that the number of calls to Grafton County Dispatch will decrease. He continued that they have improved the Grafton County Dispatch tremendously and mostly with grant monies. Last year the department received a computer for one of the cruisers through the county. We were supposed to get two computers and hopefully the second one will be received this year.

Cruiser – The Chief hopes to replace the 2004 cruiser this year.

Repairs are up \$500, mostly for radar certifications.

Printing is up \$300 due to the need to update stationary with zip codes etc.

Law publications is the same due to the utilizing the internet a lot.

Community Programs stay the same. The department writes a grant for safety helmets that are kept at the police station so that they can supply them to children as needed. The Chief continued he recommends taking the child to the hospital for proper helmet fitting. They have 20 or so helmets at this time.

Crime/accident scenes – There is new legislation that requires signs be kept in each vehicle to be posted at the scene and the department needs some new traffic cones,

Operating support covers the IMC computer 3-month updates, and copier service expense.

New Equipment-The police department has outgrown the 386/486 computers they have been using. Lt. Foley's was 8 years old and has been replaced. One for the printers has

also been replaced. They need one more. The department acquired a server through a grant which reduces the memory needs of the individual computers.

Video Camera – Move the current camera on the garage to the back of the building (have police personnel park in the back) and replace the front camera on the parking area with one that will have wide angle and the capability to zoom in on number plates if necessary. Selectman Sabourn inquired if the information is saved 24/7. Yes, however they have to reboot the recording system if there is a power failure.

Uniforms were increased because at least one officer is looking for employment elsewhere, and they may need to replace uniforms. It was upped \$350. The Chief noted that the uniforms taken to the cleaners last longer and look crisper, but some have chosen to clean uniforms themselves.

Kennel expense is increased \$50 to allow for a top on the kennels.

Blood tests – more people are requesting blood tests vs. breathalyzer, but the cost is usually recouped if the individual goes to trial. Usually blood tests are a last resort due to the need for timelines in getting results.

Legal expenses increased \$3,000 as the department went from 74 to 109 cases this last year. The area prosecutor also provides the department with some training, case law issues, and reviews information before a search warrant is issued.

Vehicle expense - Fuel costs are up \$1,000 everything else is the same. The last payment on the 2006 cruiser is also included.

Academy personnel will be certified in firearms going forward, but the department has to supply each candidate with 1000 rounds of lead free ammunition.

Chief's expense covers subscriptions and advertising new employment ads.

Detail Expense is the same and is usually reimbursed to the department.

The Forest Service line allows us to have an officer on National Forest property and is also reimbursed to the town by the USFS.

Overall there is a \$2,981 increase in the Police budget. (not including wages)

The Chief noted that the Police Department interior needs to be painted. This is not part of his budget request, but is under the Municipal Building maintenance. He stated that the chair upholstery also needs to be cleaned.

Chief Joyce stated he would like to replace the 2004 cruiser as there is almost 120,000 miles on the vehicle. Theoretically the vehicle should have been replaced last year. He

stated he would like to take \$10K out of capital reserve to cover the first payment. The TA stated that she was quite sure that capital reserve withdrawal was only allowed on the final payment of a lease-purchase. Mr. Demeritt inquired if we could move the cruiser to the Highway Department to take some of the load off of the highway vehicles. The Chief responded he is not sure it would be a good idea, due to it being a sedan and the number of miles on the cruiser plus half again for idling time. Next year the Explorer is slated for replacement and that vehicle would make more sense for the highway department. The Explorer has around 90K miles on it at this point. The Chief stated that all the electronics in a cruiser that is parked will drain the battery if they haven't been shut off. Selectman Gross inquired if AH Automotive is working well for the department. Yes, the Police Department gets priority service.

Chief Joyce inquired if the board had any questions. There were none. Selectman Gross complimented the department on its services. Chief Joyce stated that the full time officer wage line is based on a 45 hour work-week with rotating on-call hours.

Selectman Sabourn inquired if Sandy, (the new AA) is working out well. Chief Joyce stated she is, that she is very dedicated and is working out very well. Selectman Gross stated that she did a great job with the drill last week.

Chief Joyce stated that the department utilizes text messaging on cell phones vs. radio transmission on a regular basis and it is working out well.

10:30 Selectman Gross stated the Cemetery operations were under spent for 2007. The Cemetery Trustees are requesting the same amount of \$22,000 for 2008.

Emergency Management – Selectman Gross suggested that the board maintain the operations at \$2,500. An update of the Emergency Management Plan is needed. Selectman Sabourn stated that at this point he doesn't think we need to add a staff position. Selectman Gross stated he doesn't think we should push for Marianne Peabody to take on any more responsibilities at this point with all the issues at hand. Mr. Demeritt agreed that her hands are full with everything going on.

Selectman Sabourn updated the board that he is meeting with the Uhlmans and John March next Wednesday. Mr. March believes an agreement can be reached relative to the old town house property. It was stated that the remaining \$2K for land survey monies will be encumbered to Sabourn Surveying per the agreement.

The TA noted that she is meeting with CPA John Carpenter next Friday relative to required financial oversight.

The board was supplied a copy of a letter to Mr. Parziale. The board requested a letter be generated to Cobb Construction stating that there has been no request from the Town of Thornton or the Board of Selectmen for information relative to school proposals and that if there has been a request for information it has been by an individual taxpayer.

The RA suggested the board might want to consider asking Joel Freeman to place a note in her newspaper column reminding the public that there is a town ordinance prohibiting the placement/plowing of snow onto or across town roads. The board agreed that would be a good idea.

Selectmen's meetings – The board will meet next Thursday, January 3 at 9 AM. The board will meet on Tuesday, January 8 (primary day) at 4PM and then return to Wednesday morning 9 AM meetings. The Town Budget Hearing will be held in the evening on Wednesday, February 13, 2007 at 6 PM. After the budget hearing the selectmen's meetings will return to every Wednesday morning at 9 AM until after Town Meeting when the selectmen's meetings will be every other week until fall. Additional meeting will be scheduled and posted as necessary.

As a result of last week's FEMA exercise it was noted that the emergency shelter operations procedures need to be updated. Mr. Hatch from NH Department of Safety & Homeland Security stated that the Red Cross does not have the personnel to operate the shelter once opened. They would assist the community in its operation of a shelter.

The board discussed a budget request from the CDCC. It was decided not to support the request. APPROVED (x2)

APPROVALS:

Building Permits:

8 1 3

L.Zanellato

winterize porch

12:40 It was moved to adjourn. PASSED

**The next scheduled Selectmen's Meeting  
Will be  
Thursday January 3, 2007  
9:00 AM at the Municipal Building**