



Town of Thetford Vermont

3910 Vermont Route 113 • P.O. Box 126 • Thetford Center, VT 05075
802-785-2922 • www.thetfordvt.gov

Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Thetford Town Offices

(w/Virtual Attendance Option)

Monday, February 2, 2026 7:00 PM

To connect to Zoom via computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88354391166>

To connect via phone only: +1 (646) 558 8656 8656

Meeting ID: 883 5439 116

- Link to Audio Recording:

[2 2 26 Selectboard Meeting.m4a](#)

Selectboard members present:

- Chair Sharon Harkay
- Vice Chair David Goodrich
- Li Shen
- David Forbes
- Steve Tofel

Invited Guest Speaker of Selectboard, Via Zoom:

- Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner, AICP, CFM, Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission

Present from Town of Thetford:

- Town Manager Brian Story
- Tim Taylor, Chair, Town of Thetford Development Review Board

Via 'Zoom':

- Town Clerk and Treasurer, (TCC) Tracy Borst
- Assistant Town Clerk, Martie Betts
- Town Accountant, Kristie Wadsworth
- Zoning Administrator, Kelly Gardner
- Dale Lewis, Superintendent, Thetford Dept. of Public Works (DPW)
- Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard, Donna Ransmeier

Members of Public Present:

Via Zoom:

- Matthew Lyons
- Carole Petrillo
- Missy Krzal

1 **7:00 PM – Call to Order**

2 **Call to Order:** Selectboard Chair Sharon Harkay called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
3 {RTS: 00 7:00}

4
5 **1. Agenda Review {00 7:01}**

6 Chair Harkay stated that she needed to add an item to tonight’s agenda: “Review and Approval
7 of the Town Report.” Town Clerk and Treasurer (TCT) Tracy Borst requested that this item be
8 brought forward earlier rather than later on the Agenda, as she needed to leave early. Chair
9 Harkay agreed to that request, if possible, with the items that are scheduled, including the guest
10 speaker. TCT Borst said that if the Board was unable to get the review and approval of the Town
11 Report by the time she had to leave, she assumed it would be OK, as the Board had already had a
12 chance to review everything in it, and the Board also agreed with her assessment.

13
14 **2. Notes from the Selectboard Chair {00 7:04}**

15 Chair Harkay reminded everyone that the next Selectboard meeting will not occur until
16 TUESDAY, February 23, 2026, because of the President’s Day holiday. Furthermore, this
17 meeting will begin at 6:30 PM, with a planned conclusion time of 7:00PM for the regular
18 Selectboard meeting, and then will be followed immediately by the Candidates’ Forum, and then
19 the pre-Town Meeting.

20
21 **3. Town Manager Report {00 7:08}**

- 22 • **Road Salt Update:** Town Manager Story gave an update on the status of the availability
23 of winter road salt. He said that the situation in Thetford is, “a little more typical,” in that
24 it is like that of other neighboring towns. Thetford is not “out of salt,” but has not been
25 able to build up reserve amounts as they normally do. Therefore, the Department of
26 Public Works must conserve and “stretch it as far as we need to to get by until we get
27 another delivery.” He went on to say that they have secured a couple of deliveries from
28 another source, and though they do not feel that they enough to be comfortable that “it
29 won’t be a stress point,” they are hopeful that they can continue to get supplied so that
30 they can make it through the winter season.

31
32 **4. Committee and Commission Reports {00 7:12}**

33 Li Shen reported that although not a liaison, she has been receiving communications from a
34 member of the Lake Fairlee Association, who is attending current public, State-held meetings
35 regarding a regulation to allow wake boats on VT Lakes. The Lake Fairlee Assn. is opposed.
36 There was a recent meeting in Brandon, and the person communicating with Li Shen reported
37 that a large contingent of supporters of the wake boats attended, outnumbering those who were
38 against the wake boats. There is another public meeting, where anyone can voice their opinion,
39 coming up this Wednesday, in Berlin, VT. Attendance can be in person or via Zoom, or one may
40 send a comment in advance of the meeting. Li Shen has a comment form and can send this to
41 Board members via email.

42
43 **5. Public Comment {00 7:15}**

44 During this topic section, the Selectboard introduced themselves, as well as Town Manager
45 Story, and their guest speaker for tonight, Kevin Geiger, who is the Chief Planner with Two
46 Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission.

1 Additionally, Thetford resident Matthew Lyons introduced himself and his wife, Angelica, son,
2 Xavier, aged 5, and daughter, Holly. They are relatively new in Town and interested in their
3 community. Everyone extended a hearty welcome to the family!
4

5 **6. Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) Presentation on Act 250 and**
6 **Tier 1B {00 7:20}**

7 Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner at TRORC, gave a PowerPoint presentation (slides, maps, and other
8 documents are available in tonight’s meeting packet on the Town’s website at
9 <https://www.thetfordvt.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/6842/639053657560330000>)
10

11 He explained that Vermont’s Act 250, which has regulated land use and development in the State
12 since 1970, has been undergoing some revisions in the past couple of years, including the
13 inclusion of a “tiered” system that is intended to address increased housing needs through new
14 location-based regulations. Tonight’s discussion centered around towns being allowed to
15 designate areas as “Tier 1B,” which, under the new regulations, would identify parcels of land of
16 ten acres or less that are eligible to host the development of 50 or less housing units, and thus,
17 under the new classification, not subject to Act 250 regulation. (This does not mean, however,
18 that the parcels of land would be excluded from any and all other local regulations such as
19 subdivision, zoning, etc.) TRORC has identified potential sites in Thetford that are eligible to be
20 classified as “Tier 1B” (info contained in Mr. Geiger’s presentation.)
21

22 Mr. Geiger went on to explain there are five various within Thetford that could be designated as
23 Tier 1B, and included areas in East Thetford, Post Mills, North Thetford, and Thetford Center.
24 He pointed out that although there are areas available in various places, this does not mean that
25 the Town has to designate all or any of these. The designation is optional, and reasons can be
26 given for non-designation such as being in a historical area, wetlands area, etc. He said that,
27 “right now, there is an Act 250 exemption that’s basically the same on all of these areas.
28 Somebody right now can build in any of these areas and actually outside of them slightly and not
29 trigger Act 250 in the same boat. But I don’t think you’ve been overrun with [these] new
30 applications, since it hasn’t happened right now. But it certainly creates the opportunity out
31 there.” Mr. Geiger said that the main thing his organization is seeking at this point from the
32 Selectboard is a form (provided by his organization) that formally requests that there be a plan
33 for 1B property designations within the Town. He then asked for any questions.
34

35 Chair Harkay asked what might happen, if, for instance, it was decided that the Town did not
36 want all five areas that are currently designated on the map, or there were other reasons that the
37 Town did not want the specific areas included in the designations. Mr. Geiger said that because
38 the Town has its own zoning and subdivision regulations, there may be some of these that come
39 into play in these areas that might prohibit some of the 1B designations He added that other
40 reasons might be that it might be said that a development of 50 residences in North Thetford,
41 “just isn’t practical,” etc. Nothing is necessarily a firm decision as far as the designation can be
42 changed in the future. He also said that “Act 250 is a backstop,” and itself can be used to further
43 define criteria that might help a community decide on 1B designations.
44

45 Tim Taylor, Chairman of the Thetford Development Review Board (DRB), and also a member
46 representative to TRORC, asked the Selectboard to consider whether they thought the Town’s

1 DRB “is capable of doing the planning for 50 [housing] units in, say, Post Mills, or East
2 Thetford, without the additional oversight of an Act 250 Commission? I think that’s something
3 you should think about.” He pointed out that adding a 50-unit housing development to some of
4 the more rural areas of Thetford would be a big change, and that perhaps the Selectboard might
5 think about initially limiting the 1B designation to an area such as East Thetford.

6
7 Mr. Taylor also spoke about his own family farm, which has been in his family for almost 50
8 years, and the impact that Act 250 had on its purchase and growth. He also pointed out that he
9 hoped the Board would consider the character of Thetford as a rural community with an
10 agricultural history and river corridors, when it decided on where to put larger vs. smaller
11 housing developments.

12
13 Chair Harkay clarified with Mr. Geiger that the Board can consider “opting in” to the planning
14 and designation process, and that this does not have to be done immediately. He agreed that is
15 correct, but that it is hoped that the final plan will be solidified during this Summer subject to
16 some statewide hearings, and adopted this Fall.

17
18 Resident Matthew Lyons asked Mr. Geiger if a private developer who owned a parcel of ten
19 acres in one of the 1B designated areas could put a 50-unit housing development in without
20 being subject to Act 250 regulations. Mr. Geiger agreed that would be correct; however, since
21 Thetford has zoning and subdivision regulations, any developer would still be subject to those
22 regulations. There followed some discussion about wetlands regulations, and whether those are
23 affected. It was concluded that these are probably still in play as part of local and/or federal
24 laws/regulations. Tim Taylor also spoke, saying that he wanted to remind everyone of the
25 capacity study that is ongoing in Thetford, which is focusing on housing development and
26 potential in the area.

27
28 There was some discussion about what a 50-unit housing development looks like, and Mr Geigir
29 pointed out that there are a couple in White River Junction – one near the Listen Store and one
30 across the river from State Line Sports on Prospect Street. He also said that there is one called
31 “Cobb Hill.”

32
33 Li Shen reiterated that Tier 1 designation does not have to be done immediately; it can be
34 considered and done later. Mr. Geiger confirmed that is the case.

35
36 **7. Discussion and Possible Adoption Regarding Penalties for Zoning Violations {00 7:41}**

37 Zoning Administrator Kelly Gardner explained that she is proposing that fines should be levied
38 against residents who fail to obtain construction permits, or who build structures without having
39 first obtained the proper permitting. She said that she could recount several recent cases of
40 residents who had failed to obtain permits for adding decks to their homes, a house that was built
41 without a permit, and a non-English speaking resident who was unaware of the permitting
42 process or zoning regulations, and did not obtain the proper permits.

43
44 Upon questions from Chair Harkay, Ms. Gardner stated that she felt that she should have some
45 discretion about the amount of fines to be levied. However, after some discussion, she agreed
46 that this could be perceived as unfair and become unmanageable unless there was a set schedule

1 of fines developed that was based on policy. Town Manager Story reminded everyone that the
2 Zoning Ordinance was clear that all fees are set by the Selectboard, and that the Administrator
3 does have discretion to waive.

4
5 Ms. Gardner had also brought a copy a document from another town that showed an example of
6 a fee and “after the fact” fee schedule. It also stated that the zoning administrator had discretion
7 to adjust or waive any fee.

8
9 Among the Board, and Ms. Gardner there was discussion about examples of situations that might
10 warrant waiving or reduction of fees. Chair Harkay suggested that Ms. Gardner and Town
11 Manager story work on a pamphlet that could be available at Ms. Gardner’s office that would
12 publicize fees and penalties. Ms. Gardner thought the information should also be on the Town
13 website and List Serv. She does have applications and information about permit fees available
14 outside of her office door.

15
16 Ms. Gardner and Town Manager Story agreed that they will work together and come up with a
17 new Zoning fees/permits list with a penalties section for non-compliance, as well. This will be
18 given to the Selectboard for review and approval. They think it may be ready to present at the
19 next Board meeting on 2/23/3036.

20 21 **8. Review and Possible Approval of the Annual Town Report of 2025 {00 7:50}**

22 The Board had read and reviewed the final draft of the Town Report before the meeting, and
23 noted that all of the changes they had heretofore requested had been included in the current
24 version. Chair Harkay stated that all that was needed was their “formal approval.” Chair Harkay
25 asked if there was any further discussion on the Town Report.

26 Being none, she asked Vice-Chair David Goodrich if he would make a motion to approve and
27 accept.

28 Vice-Chair David Goodrich made a “Motion to Approve and Accept the Annual Town Report of
29 2025.”

30 Chair Harkay asked if there was any discussion on the motion. Being none, she called for an “all
31 in favor” vote.

32 All Board members present voted “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **The Motion Passed.**

33 34 **9. Adoption of the 2026-2028 New England Police Benevolent Association (NEPBA) 35 Contract {00 7:57}**

36 Chair Harkay asked Town Manager Story if he wished to speak to the Law Enforcement
37 Contract before the vote was taken. He said that he much of the contract’s language had been
38 “cleaned up,” making it easier to read, clearer, and easier to understand, and that had been a
39 major goal for the changes. He commented that there had not been many changes made to the
40 contract section concerning working conditions, but that some conditions relating to working
41 under the influence of drugs and alcohol were made stronger as far as disciplinary actions. He
42 also noted that there had been some “better protections” regarding the taking of time off and
43 other practices, but not many other changes in comparison to the prior contract and this one. He
44 said that the biggest change was the wage schedule, which was, “considerably higher than what
45 we were paying before.” He stated that the Town had been underpaying the officers, before, and
46 that the pay schedule was now “right around in the 75th to 80th percentile in terms of towns that

1 we compare to...similar to other towns across the State.” He went on to say that he felt
2 confident that this contract was the best that could be negotiated under the current circumstances.

3
4 Chair Harkay asked the Board if anyone had any questions.

5
6 Li Shen said that she had read the contract and that the typographical errors had been corrected,
7 and references to individuals removed.

8
9 Chair Harkay commented that if it became clear during Town Meeting that the majority of voters
10 objected to hiring a third police officer, given the current pay scale [under the contract] that
11 could be “taken under advisement,” and the contract would not be “locking us into [approving] a
12 third officer.” Town Manager said yes, that was a correct statement.

13
14 Chair Harkay asked if there were any other questions or further discussion. Being none, she
15 made a “Motion to Approve the 2026 to 2028 New England Police Benevolent Association
16 Contract for the Thetford Police Department.”

17 She asked if there were any questions or discussion on the motion. Being none, she called for an
18 “all in favor” vote.

19 All members present voted “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **The Motion Passed.**

20
21 **9. Liquor Control Board Action on Huggett’s Store Annual Liquor License and Tobacco**
22 **Licenses {00 8:04}**

23 Chair Harkay made a “Motion to Suspend the Selectboard Meeting to Convene the Liquor
24 Control Board Meeting.”

25 Chair Harkay noted that the Board is acting on approval for an annual application from Huggett’s
26 Mobile Service for its second-class liquor license, as well as its tobacco license and tobacco
27 substitute endorsement.

28 Chair Harkay asked if there was any discussion on approval of the above licenses for Huggett’s
29 Mobile Service for a period of one year. Being none, she asked Li Shen to make a motion.

30 Li Shen made a “Motion to Approve Three Licenses – the Liquor License, the Tobacco License,
31 and the Tobacco Substitute Endorsement, for a Period of One Year, for Huggett’s Mobile
32 Service.”

33 Chair Harkay asked if there was any discussion on the Motion.

34 Being none, she called for an “all in favor vote.”

35 All members voted “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **The Motion Passed.**

36
37 **10. Warrants and Minutes {00 8:07}**

38 **Warrants:**

39 Below are the Warrants for 02.02.2026, as provided by Kristie Wadsworth, CVT, Thetford Town
40 Accountant. These were reviewed by the Selectboard.

3.1	\$40245.94
4.1	\$69340.93
4.2	\$21601.32
3.2	\$51338.55
3.3	\$6532.51
4.3	\$1504.02

1
2 Chair Harkay asked for any further discussion on the Warrants. Being none, she called for a
3 “Motion to Approve.”
4 Steve Forbes made a “Motion to Approve the Warrants of February 2, 2026, as Reviewed.”
5 Chair Harkay called for any discussion on the Motion. Being none, she called for a “roll-call
6 vote.”
7 Li Shen – In Favor
8 Steve Tofel – In Favor
9 Vice Chair Goodrich – In Favor
10 Steve Forbes – In Favor
11 Chair Harkay – In Favor
12 All votes were “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **Motion Passed.**

13 14 **Minutes**

15
16 The meeting minutes of the regular Selectboard Meeting of 01/26/2026, and the special
17 Selectboard Budget Meeting of 1/28/2026, were reviewed and edited as appropriate, by the
18 Board.

19
20 Chair Harkay asked if there was any further discussion on either set of meeting minutes.
21 Being none, she asked for a “Motion to Approve Both Sets of Meeting Minutes.”
22 Li Shen made a “Motion to Approve the Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2026, and January 28,
23 2026, as Reviewed and Edited.”
24 Chair Harkay called for any further discussion on the Motion.
25 Being none, she called for an “all in favor” vote.
26 All members of the Board voted “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **Motion Passed.**

27 28 **11. Adjourn**

29 At 8:48 PM, Chair Harkay inquired if there was any further discussion or business for this
30 meeting.
31 Being none, she called for a “Motion to Adjourn.”
32 Steve Tofel made a “Motion to the Adjourn the Meeting at 8:48 PM.”
33 Chair Harkay called for any further discussion on the Motion.
34 Being none, she called for an “all-in-favor” vote.
35 All members present voted “in favor.” The vote was unanimous. **Motion Passed.**

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Date 09/15/2025

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Thetford Selectboard Meeting Minutes