

TALES OF TINMOUTH

January 2024
Vol. 38 Number 1

Tinmouth
Vermont

Editors' Notes: *May the New Year be filled with Health and Happiness. Please Pray for Peace . . . Be Kind . . .*

The deadline for submissions (news, items of interest, get well wishes, ads, etc.) is the 20th of the preceding month. Please email your information to *Tales of Tinmouth* (tinmouthtales@vermontel.net) or drop it off at the Town Office.

Gail Fallar & Pat Psholka

~ **Special Informational Meeting ~**
Pre-Town Meeting
Tuesday, January 16th 7:00
Old Fire House (next to the Town Office)

The Tinmouth Select Board will hold a **Special Informational Meeting on Tuesday, January 16th at 7:00 at the Old Fire House** to allow voters a chance to provide input on proposed budgets and other town meeting issues that will be on the ballot for the March 5th Town Meeting.

The Select Board decided to hold a special meeting in January as town meeting voting is now all done by Australian balloting – and by statute they are required to hold an informational meeting within 10 days of town meeting (March 5th this year). Some folks have already voted absentee by then.

Please mark your calendar – and take this opportunity to ask questions and provide input. Please note the location of the meeting – the Old Fire House – where we will be able to use the Town's WiFi for the Zoom connection.

The Select Board will be working on proposed budgets at their regular meeting on the 11th, and will provide copies at this meeting. They look forward to your input.

Refreshments will be provided. Hope to see you there!

Town Garage Phone Number

If you need to alert the road crew about a tree across the road or have concerns with road conditions, please be advised the Town Garage has a telephone and answering machine.

Please leave a message, as the road crew most likely will be out working on the roads.

802-446-9163

“Whenever you are to do a thing, though it can never be known but to yourself, ask yourself how you would act were all the world looking at you, and act accordingly.” - - **Thomas Jefferson**

~ **Town Meeting 2024 ~**
March 5th

There will be a formal informational meeting before votes are cast on the 5th. The Select Board has not yet decided when that will be held – within 10 days of voting.

The articles on the warning will be discussed, and then voting is done at the Community Center on Tuesday, March 5th from 8:00 am – 7:00pm. Early (absentee) balloting is also available.

Town Meeting will find voters choosing the following officers:

Moderator - Town - 1 year term
Select Board Member - 3 year term
Road Commissioner– 3 year term
Community Center Board Member-3 year term
Lister - 3 year term
Auditor - 3 year term
Tax Collector (Delinquent) - 1 year term

Highway and General budgets and public questions will also be voted by Australian ballot.

Holly Ross is running for re-election as Moderator.

Eric Buffum is thinking about running for re-election as Road Commissioner.

Cat Yoder is running for re-election as Delinquent Tax Collector.

Pat Psholka is running for re-election as Lister.

Martha Stanley is running for re-election to the Community Center Board.

Meadow Squier is **not** running for re-election as a Select Board member.

Vito Macaluso is **not** running for re-election as an Auditor.

Please feel free to run for any of these offices.

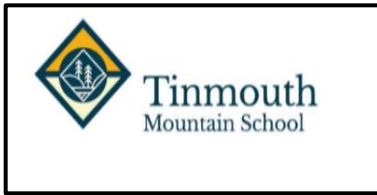
~ **Petition Deadlines ~**

To run for an office, you need to file a petition with the signatures of 5 voters, and a consent form. The deadline to submit your petition to the town clerk for officers is **Monday, January 29th**. Petitions are available at the town office.

The deadline for petitions for Articles (public questions) to be added to the town meeting warning is **Thursday, January 18th**. You will need 21 voter signatures for that.

~ **Mill River Unified Union School District ~**

MRUUSD will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, February 22nd at Mill River High School. Voting on the budget will occur on March 5th.



To the Tinmouth Community,

Due to the holiday break, December included only 14 days of school. There were a few days when classroom absences were at 10 or more students due to flu, Covid, or colds.

The week before the holiday break the students drove by school bus to quite a few residences in Tinmouth bringing cheer and ornaments, they had made for folks who were homebound. They also sang carols and holiday songs.

The eleven days of holiday break revived both spirits and health. Students were surprised upon returning to school to find an ice arena (rink) on the Town Green in front of the school. Broomball and skating are now an option during recess. The staff is very thankful to the volunteers who constructed the arena and the firemen who filled it. Doug Fontein and Cathy Reynolds designed and coordinated this project! It was completed in record time! I'm always amazed by the support, care, and "can-do" attitude of the Tinmouth community!

January 8th is the start of our Winter Sports Programs. On Mondays throughout January, February, and March, students are skiing and snowboarding at Pico or skating at Spartan Arena. Pico provides lessons as well as passes for use throughout the season. This program is a great opportunity for students to develop healthy, lifelong skills.

Volunteers Needed

There are two programs coming up in the early spring that we need community members to run. These are *Girls on the Run* and *Velocity*.

Velocity

Velocity is a unique six week afterschool program designed for 3rd through 6th grade students who identify as male. It is designed to increase self esteem, encourage an active lifestyle, provide opportunities to try new fitness activities in a non-competitive setting, and build communication skills in an environment where students can challenge themselves physically and mentally. Activities in the past have included hiking, orienteering, rock climbing, cooking, martial arts, biking, weight training, skateboard instruction, archery, mountain biking, and disc golf. We need a male role model to volunteer for six weeks (once a week) afterschool.

If you have questions, please contact Rick Beal, Velocity Program Coordinator, 802-683-9053.

Girls on the Run

Every *Girls on the Run* season, volunteer coaches foster empathy and acceptance by empowering participants to build strong connections with one another, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or beliefs. Throughout the program, girls learn to appreciate the beauty of diversity and grow into compassionate, understanding, and open-minded individuals. Become a GOTR coach and play a vital role in developing these positive relationships.

Our 10-week season begins the week of March 18. Our team will meet twice weekly for 90 minutes each session to connect, move, learn and have FUN! No running or coaching experience is required. Coaches are provided with comprehensive training, a curriculum that maps out each session, supplies and support from GOTRVT for an enriching season. Programs are for girls in 3rd-8th grade. Visit gotrvt.org/coach to learn more or sign up to volunteer. Questions? Contact GOTRVT at info@girlsontherunvermont.org or 802-871-5664.

Please consider volunteering to run one of these programs. If you need more information please reach out to Jenn Galusha - jgalusha@millriverschools.org (Girls on the Run) or Jenn Tift - jtift@millriverschools.org (Velocity) – both can be reached at 802-446-2458. Thank you for truly making a difference for our students!

Wishing you Blessings and Joy in the New Year!

Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker
Principal
Tinmouth Mountain School

Friends of the Rutland Free Library January Book Sale

10 Court Street., Rutland, VT 05701 802-773-1860
Friday, Jan. 12 (10 -2) and Saturday, Jan. 13, (10 -2)

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www.rutlandfree.org



TINMOUTH
CHURCH

~ Tinmouth Community Church ~

Beginnings. Endings. New beginnings. New endings. Still more beginnings folding again into more endings, an ongoing cycle of Life begetting life, even as each ending is a death of sorts.

Awareness of inevitable endings can awaken us to the preciousness of *Now* - this miraculous moment, this amazing though transient thought, this passing but no less significant feeling, the persona Christi right in front of us and most everywhere we go, the wonder of life existing at all. *Now* wakes us to be attentive, to embrace the unfolding of life with all our heart and mind and strength, to love life and give it our love.

Some endings may feel like they can't come soon enough, such as times of sickness or grief. Some of them we may wish would never end, like this Christmas spent with my 90-year-old dad, sister, son and fiancé, and Sue. So soon ended and now, a few short days later, another new beginning - Dad is in the hospital with Covid.... And you know what I am wondering.... A gift in part of my own advancing age, I have been more keenly aware of the preciousness of being together this Christmas - and of not being together - with our daughter and son-in-law in VA and Mom in heaven. Beginnings transitioning into endings giving birth to new beginnings, a continuum of Life in varied manifestations calling forth in us a greater capacity to love and to trust in the Divine Life pervading and coordinating it all. This awakens, this awareness, this aliveness in the *Now*, that was, is and will always be in some form of Being and dimension of Reality, has me focused on writing this article. And the *Now* of now is gifting me with recollections of this Christmas just lived and of tentatively held expectations of new beginnings in the coming New Year. And right, right now, I'm thinking of you and appreciating afresh this marvelous community called Tinmouth.

As 2023 ends and 2024 begins, may we be mindful that "Now is the time of salvation." So let us live fully this moment, neither dwelling in the past nor preoccupied with tomorrow, but present to each other with hearts full of love. Let us be alive in the reality of *Now*, confident that in every ending there is a new beginning, for Life and Love never end.

**Blessings,
Pastor John**

Rev. John Hardman-Zimmerman
(802) 282-7532 (cell, preferred)
(802) 884-8249 (parsonage)
hzfam@hotmail.com



~ Christmas Baskets ~

The **Roy & Anne Wilbur Fund**, under the umbrella of the **Tinmouth Community Church**, along with the **Tinmouth Elves**, provided food and gift baskets to 20 families this year. There were also 21 fruit baskets delivered to elders and those needing a small boost of holiday spirit. They were very much appreciated.

Thank you to all who donated food, time, and financially to make this happen. It helps keep Tinmouth a special place.

Thank you also to the Tinmouth Community Church for the use of its basement, to the Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department for use of its refrigerators, to the Mill River Union High School Honor Society for its wonderful food contributions, and to the Tinmouth Community Fund for grants and the Wallingford Thrift Shop's donation for the Elves work.

~ Front Porch Forum ~

Connect with your Tinmouth Neighbors

Have you checked out Front Porch Forum yet? To sign up, go to <http://FrontPorchForum.com>. Or stop by the town office to sign up!! 200+ households have signed to date! Good way to discuss community issues, sell a canoe, give away a kitten, etc. If you are a second home owner you can use your 911 address.



~ January reminder from
your local
Fire Department (TVFD) ~

Please remember to keep your walkways shoveled and clear – *even to the doors you only use occasionally* – you never know when you might need the Rescue Squad or which door they may need to use. Goes for the inside too, don't block doorways with 'stuff'. You may need to make a hasty exit (in case of fire) or the Fire Department may need to get in.

TVFD also reminds everyone to make sure that your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working and that you have MORE THAN ONE WAY out of your house!

~ Nature Notes ~

Warmest December on record, no white Christmas or New Year's Day.

The is an old adage that says, "As the days lengthen, the cold strengthens" – not so this year . . . so far.

Night crawlers and fishworms were out and about on New Year's Day!

~ **Tinmouth Pond Reminisces** ~

“The Day I Tried to Impress the Girls”

By John (Jack) Thomson

It was a warm summer day at Tinmouth Pond. My father and my Uncle Jeff were sitting on the front porch, I was swimming. Then I spotted the boat coming across the lake toward our camp. It was the cute girls again, one was a redhead, the other a blond, both with nice figures. They were laughing and having fun. I think they liked the fact that I was looking at them.

So, being a 14 year old boy, I decided to act all macho and show off. I started at the beginning of the dock, and I ran as fast as I could, then I took an extra high leap into the air before performing the perfect dive into the 6 feet of cool water below. I knew I was impressive; they surely would stop and say hi. And then I felt my head hit the rock. I misjudged the depth of my dive. The pain was ungodly. When I emerged, I could feel the water and blood dripping down my face. Trying to look macho, I stayed in the water hoping no one would notice. But my father and uncle were yelling to me repeatedly, “Get up here. You’re bleeding”, as I yelled back, “I’m alright.” Eventually I got out of the water, never once looking at the girls who had slowed to see what the commotion was all about.

My father had run to the car, luckily it was his business car equipped with everything a country veterinarian would need to treat large and small animals, and an occasional teenage boy. As the two professional doctors, my father a veterinarian and my uncle a cardiologist, sutured the gash in my head, the girls rowed past our cottage. I still remember the feel of the cotton, the smell of the alcohol, and the sound of the scissors as they trimmed the hair off the flap of skin on the side of my head. I still the scar today. I was humiliated, but it was nothing compared to what happened next.

My uncle told me I couldn’t go swimming for a while and when I did, I could not get my head wet, so I had to wear my mother’s bathing cap. The next day, before going outside, I peeked out the door, making sure the girls were nowhere to be seen. I was pretty sure I no longer looked like the macho boy I had been the day before. Then my worst fears came true as I saw the boat with the blond and the redhead coming toward me. All I wanted to do was dig a hole and hide. Instead, I ran as fast as I could back inside.


My mother didn’t sympathize with me. I was being a showoff. She always told me to never show off because it would always get you in trouble. My mother was right. This is something I have lived by ever since that day at Tinmouth Pond. Showing off doesn’t pay. And I never did talk to the girls.

(Mr. Thomson owns the dam at Tinmouth Pond.)



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~ **Meeting Highlights** ~

Complete minutes are available at the town office. Minutes are written by Gail Fallar unless otherwise noted. All highlights are edited by Ye Olde Editor.

Select Board (SB) ~ 12/14/2023

Members present (in-person): Kevin Eaton, Meadow Squier, and Judy Gilmore

Others present:

In-person: Rutland County Sheriff David Fox, Michael Fallar, Rick Fallar, Eric Buffum-Road Commissioner, Hollis Squier, Alice Hoisington, David Levant, and Gail Fallar-Select Board Assistant (SBA)

Via Zoom: Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Miles Fallar, Ali Jenkins, David Birdsall, Nancy Gucker Birdsall, and Pat Psholka

Citizen's Input ~ Michael requested that the town meeting ballots include the annual allotments listed individually so that voters could have a say on each one. Members discussed, added to the agenda for January's meeting.

Speed Limit Enforcement ~ Board and Sheriff Fox discussed current practices – David advised that staffing issues have kept weekly enforcement hours below the budgeted 10. Board asked to have some of the hours worked varied so that occasionally there is someone running radar during 7-9 am and 5-7 pm – as those seem to be the hours people are driving to work and home again – and when the most speeding happens. Board inquired about changing the speed limits – the Sheriff advised 85% will drive safely and obey the speed limit, the speeders won't change, lowering the limit will not affect them. The RCSD's speed cart is off-line for the winter, will not be available until spring time. The Sheriff noted the proposed increase of 7% was due mainly to insurance and training, as well as competition for a limited number of law enforcement officers. The Board thanked the Sheriff and his staff for their work.

Traffic Ordinance ~ The Speed Limit Study Committee sent the draft revised ordinance back to the SB, unchanged, and asked the SB to proceed to review so that enforcement would have a better outcome in court - the Sheriff advised that judges often seem to throw out a town's ordinance if it isn't just so. After brief discussion, the Board voted to send the draft Traffic Ordinance to VLCT and the Rutland County Sheriff's Office for review.

Highway ~

Eric reported the Town's insurance company recently did a safety/risk assessment inspection. Report should be available for the next meeting. The road crew has started some maintenance on the old town garage.

Winter Salt ~ Eric advised he had signed a contract with Cargill Salt - the Town needed salt for the paved roads and they were the cheapest. Board discussed the

bid process – that Cargill did not follow it – they emailed a proposal – Board decided to review process before next year's bidding takes place – should electronic bidding be allowed? Members were uncomfortable with this year's process – but in the end, the Board voted to accept Cargill's proposal and ratify Eric's decision.

Valentine Farm LLC Driveway Permit Application ~ 671 Route 140 – This was the existing farm/shooting range access. It will serve two lots. Board approved with condition that culvert be made 20' longer. SBA advised that **Kevin Brown** has finally settled on the location for his driveway on the southern end of the VFLLC property – 1445 feet from the intersection with Mountain View Road. Board accepted the change to his permit.

TAP Grant Reimbursement Request ~ Board reviewed invoice prepared by the Project Manager – RRPC, for reimbursement for the salt/sand shed grant work done to date. Board voted to approve the reimbursement request to the State.

Financial ~

No FY24 reports to review. Board reviewed proposed FY25 general budget (will ponder), highway budget discussion was moved to January.

Bills and Orders ~ Board reviewed and approved payroll and accounts payable warrants/orders.

Authority to Sign Warrants Between Meetings ~ Meadow advised that she wished to relinquish this authority. Board voted to authorize Kevin to sign the orders.

Holiday Bonuses ~ After brief discussion, Board voted to give \$100 each to the road crew, transfer station crew and town office staff.

ARPA Funds ~ Still waiting for new estimate from the Old Creamery Committee, no decisions at this time. There is about \$85,000 to allocate and spend. Added to January agenda.

Cameras at the Transfer Station ~ Board discussed after hours traffic in and out of the facility, whether a gate might be needed, and whether to install cameras or signs. Board decided a sign was needed stating no after hour use was allowed, Tinmouth residents/taxpayers only, and no trespassing. Also noted a reminder in *Tales of Tinmouth* and on Front Porch Forum would be advisable.

Community Needs Assessment ~ RRPC advised they will be available after January to begin the process. Meadow inquired whether a systems assessment would also be worthwhile.

Winter Use of the Old Fire House ~ This has been mainly used only during the spring, summer and fall. There are now folks wanting to use it in the winter as well. The Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department recently decided that it will provide the propane for the heater, the Road Commissioner advised he will change the way the snow is plowed (will use loader to remove if need be), and the Select Board decided that the users will be responsible

for shoveling snow for the path and walkways. All agreed to try it for this winter and revisit if need be next year.

Special Informational Meeting in January ~ The Board decided to hold a special meeting in January to allow voters a way to provide input on the proposed budgets and other town meeting issues, as town meeting voting is all done by Australian balloting – and by statute the Board is required to hold an informational meeting within 10 days of town meeting (March 5th this year). Attendance at that meeting has been sparse and some folks have already voted absentee by then. The Board chose Tuesday, January 16th, at 7:00 at the Old Fire House, to hold this meeting.

REMC Appointments ~ Board voted to ratify Meadow's action of appointing Ray Pratt (EMD) and Matthew Patry (EMC) as Tinmouth's representatives to the Rutland Emergency Management Committee.

Vermont Farmers Food Center (VFFC) Request for Town Meeting Funding ~ Meadow stepped down from the Chair and sat on the other side of the table to explain this group's request. She is on the VFFC Board and a farmer who participates in their programs. The request is for \$500 to support their endeavors. All towns in the county are being asked for funding. VFFC supports local farms/food and helped provide food during the Covid pandemic. Kevin moved and Judy 2nded to add to the warning for town meeting. Both voted yes, Meadow abstained. Meadow resumed the Chair.

Request to Build an Ice Rink on the Town Green ~ The school requested permission to build an ice rink on the Town Green – if they can find a flat spot and if it gets cold enough. After brief discussion, Board agreed by consensus to give permission.

Feedback Forms ~ None

Members Concerns ~ None

Correspondence ~ Ali wrote in the Zoom Chat that she appreciated the work on traffic/speeding issues and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Planning Commission ~ 12/21/2023

Members present in-person: Michael Fallar, Vito Macaluso, Larry Carabeau, Judy Gilmore, Andy Gilmore, and Rainbow Squier

Members present via Zoom: Bob Lloyd, Kim Harbaugh and Pat Psholka

Others: present in-person: Travis Lepley, Cameron Lepley, Matthew Silverman, (all Valentine Farm LLC); Jeremy Gildrien – RRPC; and Gail Fallar Secretary; and via Zoom: Sherry Johnson,

Travis presented a draft survey of the proposed 7 lot subdivision of the former Valentine farm on Route 140.

This is a second preliminary meeting. Michael noted that this will be reviewed as a major subdivision as there are more than 4 lots. He advised the survey needs to contain proposed driveways, house location, zoning

districts, fragile areas, proposed exterior lighting etc – reading from the checklist for subdividers. Travis noted that most lots did not have a plan for a house at this time, that there is a 44KV power line owned by OMYA that delivers electricity from Proctor to the quarry in Danby, and that the mountain is very steep. He was advised that some of the requirements could be waived by the PC if they deemed them unapplicable to this project. After more discussion, members voted to allow the project to proceed to a formal hearing. Travis, Cameron and Matthew left at this point. They hope to be ready for the hearing to be held at the next PC meeting in January.

Jeremy, planner from Rutland Regional Planning Commission, was present to begin the discussion about updating the Enhanced Energy Plan section of the current Town Plan. He gave a general overview – some standards set by the State have changed – only solar and wind need to be addressed for instance – not all forms of renewables. And the plan now has to address the equity impact of the Enhanced Energy section – evaluate how the EE plan impacts various people in town. There was a discussion about how equity is defined and by whom.

Jeremy recommended that the PC define preferred sites for the location of renewable energy projects, rather than list where they would not be allowed. He acknowledged that the 'data' provided by the state regarding current usage for electricity, transportation, etc. was not exact – but to be used to as estimates understand the bigger picture.

Members discussed whether it would be advantageous to have an EEP – most important to obtain substantial deference when an application goes before the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The PUC still has final say, and depending on how the EEP is written, the town may or may not have substantial deference.

Jeremy noted that a strong EEP would get most control – include where renewables would be allowed, meet energy goals with other types of energy – geothermal for example. A mix of energy is needed, just not solar or wind, and should include energy efficiency as well. He advised that the state is not demanding towns have an EEP, but wants to encourage actions that plan for the future and benefit people who live in town. It is the Town's decision whether it is a stand alone plan or part of the Town Plan. Members expressed an interest in geothermal and nuclear option.

Bob noted that the Regional Plan is being updated, and inquired if the new plan would contain the '*no industrial wind*' in Rutland County that's in the current plan. Jeremy advised that it would.

There was discussion about to reach everyone in town, from those who regularly participate in town activities to those who do not – why not, how to get their input. Jeremy shared a draft of the EEP that the Town of Brandon is working on.

Members discussed whether to apply for a MERP mini-grant to contract with RRPC to help Tinmouth write its EEP. Kim moved and Rainbow 2nd to apply for the grant. Discussion ensued about what exactly the grant would cover, for instance would Jeremy read Tinmouth's current EEP chapter in the Town Plan, and the earlier energy section in the 2017 Town Plan and advise what is needed to meet the new standards? The answer was no, it would be used for flyers, a community meeting, data collection, and provide technical assistance. Current maps may be okay – may not need all of them. After more discussion, Andy moved and Judy 2nd to table Kim's motion until the January 18th meeting. All voted in favor. Members decided to read Brandon's plan for the January PC meeting.

Equity and Inclusion Committee ~ 11/14/23

~ *Minutes still not available as Tales goes to print.*

Conservation Commission ~ 11/20/23

~ *With thanks to Chuck Bronk, Sec.*

Members present: Ed Hasenohr, Rainbow Squier, Doug Fontein, Robbie Leeds, Jeff Ams, and Chuck Bronk.

Public Present: Gail Fallar and David Birdsall.

New Business:

David Birdsall, forester, explained that the new owner, Dale Aines, of a woodland parcel in the 'Purchase', east and west of the Town Forest, intended to log the property next year and sought to make improvements to the Pent Road (a Class 4 road) so that it would be able to handle logging trucks. Doug Fontein commented that this would be a mixed blessing for the Town as it would improve a Class 4 Road at no expense to the Town, but it would also allow for increased vehicular traffic. The owner is willing to do what the Town wishes but Gail Fallar noted that the Select Board would have to approve any improvements to a town road. The deed to the town's parcel includes two separate rights of way intended to allow passage from the end of the Pent Road to the Town Forest. The one to the West is longer and the one to the East is much steeper. Both are very wet much of the year and not easily traversable by motor vehicles other than four wheelers or four-wheel drive tractors (which are not allowed).

Doug read from the Management Plan for the Town Forest property dated April 7, 1999, that only snowmobiles, maintenance vehicles, vehicles transporting handicapped, horses, and mountain bicycles were permitted on the right of ways/trails granted through the Aines property. Other vehicles, such as four wheelers were prohibited. Gail pointed out that four wheelers were not allowed on Town roads (written permission is needed to ride on someone else's land). Members voted that the Conservation Committee request that the Mr. Aines provide a gate at his property line, near the kiosk, which could be closed, when wet conditions would stop all

traffic damaging to the trails, but open for snowmobiles when snow is on the ground.

There followed a discussion of bicycles using the right of ways, visiting the Town's cabin and overlook, and having scavenger hunts on the Aines property (without permission). These seem to be organized by the Analog bike shop in Poultney. Absent a means of enforcement, controlling such activities are beyond the capacity of the Commission. Rainbow suggested that we table until a future meeting, the use of bikes on trails and means of avoiding erosion. She also posed the idea of inviting representatives of Analog to a future meeting.

Recreation Committee ~ 12/4/23

~ *With thanks to David Levant, Sec.*

Members Present: Doug Fontein, Robbie Leeds & David Levant in person and Colleen Balch by zoom; Martha Stanley was unable to attend.

Others Gail Fallar, Select Board Assistant (the "SBA")

Organization: The first order of business was the selection of officers. The following members of the Committee agreed to serve in the indicated offices:

Robbie Leeds, Chair

Colleen Balch, Vice Chair

David Levant, Secretary

The SBA advised the Committee about requirements for agenda and minutes, and the State's Open Meeting Law.

Budget: The SBA advised that the Committee does not have a budget but may be able to apply for funds from the Tinmouth Community Fund or request funds from the Select Board (the "**Board**"). Colleen Balch advised that she has grant-writing experience.

The SBA provided the Committee, as part of the draft agenda, with excerpts of the minutes of the Board meeting at which it was decided that the Recreation Committee should be formed. The Committee discussed the following matters identified by the Board in the excerpts as work for the Committee.

Town Lot: The Town owns an irregularly shaped approximately 11-acre property east of the Town Office, Old Firehouse, and Old Creamery, that is only accessed from Route 140, at the town garage and transfer station. Roughly one-third of the property is presently used or planned to be used for the Town garage, recycling and transfer stations, and sand and salt storage shed. The remaining two-thirds or so of the lot (the southern portion of the property, the "*Town Lot*") is available for development for recreational purposes, subject to determination, among other things, of what use(s) would be best (*e.g.*, playing fields, trails, an amphitheater, racket courts, etc.), how the Town Lot can be accessed, and securing of funding. The Committee members and SBA discussed the history of the Town Lot and access issues relating to it. No vote or action of any kind was taken at the meeting with respect to the Town Lot.

Survey: The Board requested that the Committee start its work by surveying town people to help determine what kinds of recreation is wanted/needed. Accordingly, the Committee members discussed a survey and decided to undertake follow-up with two forms of survey. First, it was agreed that the SBA should ask Devin Neary, Executive Director of the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC), about the needs assessment that the RRPC will be performing in the next few months for the Town/Select Board with the hope that the Committee can piggyback onto this multimedia survey of town residents. Second, the Committee members agreed that it would be helpful for them to survey what other nearby towns of similar size do for recreational activities and what their recreation committees do. It was agreed that the Committee members would follow-up as follows:

Doug Fontein:	Poultney
Robbie Leeds:	Wallingford
Colleen Balch:	Shrewsbury
David Levant:	Clarendon
Martha Stanley:	[To be determined]

It was proposed that the survey include both a review of the other towns' websites and, if possible, communication with a member of its recreation committee.

Colleen Balch suggested that the Committee might create a resource identifying recreational opportunities in both Tinmouth and other nearby towns. She also suggested that the Committee look back to prior Tinmouth Town activities and traditions, such as Christmas caroling for homebound residents.

Mission Statement: Robbie Leeds proposed the following mission statement for review and discussion by the Committee at its next meeting: "Our mission is to provide (and maintain?) recreational spaces and offer programs to enhance the quality of life for our community members."

In connection with the discussion of the mission statement, the Committee members discussed the sorts of recreational activities they are interested in seeing the Town develop. The activities mentioned included walking, hiking, trail running, skiing, Nordic skating, birding, wild-flowering, disc golf, tennis, pickleball, team sports, and kids sports, concerts. The Committee also discussed some of the Town's existing recreational resources, including the playing fields next to the Community Center and various trail systems.

Next Meeting: 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 8, 2024 at the Town Office.

~ Community News ~

Thank you to **Ronnie Crossman** for splitting firewood for the Town Office and to **Miles and Ari Fallar** for stacking it in the basement!

Ice Fishing Safety for Inconsistent Ice Conditions

MONTPELIER, Vt. – Ice conditions across Vermont are inconsistent due to warm and variable weather, and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is urging anglers to put safety first if they venture out ice fishing.

"Check the ice as you go, avoid areas where currents can create weaker ice, and if you are not sure the ice is safe find a different waterbody," cautioned fisheries biologist Shawn Good. "With good judgment ice fishing is a safe and fun way to get outside in winter. But that means making cautious, smart decisions and changing plans if conditions are not what you hoped for."

Ice conditions are currently variable across Vermont. At higher elevations and in the Northeast Kingdom many lakes and ponds have frozen over completely and have fishable ice. But in southern Vermont and the Champlain Valley, many lakes and ponds are not yet safe for ice fishing.

"Three to four inches of clear black ice is the minimum for safe ice fishing," said Good. "For the kind of gray or opaque ice we get after repeated freezing, thawing, and re-freezing we recommend anglers look for at least six inches of ice where they plan to fish."

Even on a single waterbody it is important to know that ice thickness is not always uniform. Areas around pressure cracks or near stream or river inlets can be thinner and weaker than surrounding ice.

The department says anglers should always carry a spud bar to test the ice as they go and should have a set of personal ice picks for self-rescue. Anglers should avoid fishing alone and should let someone know where they will be fishing and when they plan on returning home.

But despite poor or non-existent early season ice conditions in some areas of Vermont, eager anglers can still find safe ice fishing opportunities this month.

"While we wait for colder weather to freeze up waterbodies statewide, I recommend anglers focus on planning and getting their gear in top shape—or that they hit the road and explore the higher elevation waters or northern waters where there is already good ice," said Good. "Fishing somewhere other than your home waters can be part of the adventure and allure of ice fishing, and is a great way to explore Vermont."

To learn more about ice fishing safety, tips for beginners, and places to fish visit Vermont Fish and Wildlife's "[Ice Fishing Basics](#)" and "[Ice Fishing Opportunities](#)" webpages.

Tinmouth Historical & Genealogical Society Meeting

All are welcome to attend the **Sunday, January 28th** THGS meeting to discuss programs for 2024.

Please come with your ideas for events THGS can do to promote interest in Tinmouth's history!!

2:00 at the **Town Office**, refreshments will be provided.

The following was submitted by Nancy Gucker Birdsall

Stories Told in Tinmouth:

The prompt for the evening is “Wintering”
Friday January 12 at 7:00 pm at the
Tinmouth Old Firehouse



Please join us for an ongoing series of storytelling evenings at the Tinmouth Old Firehouse in beautiful downtown Tinmouth.

The prompt for January 12 is Wintering so your story could be your winter story, or another.

Stories about Tinmouth are always welcome.

If you want to come just to listen, you will hear all sorts of tales and you'll definitely laugh out loud. The audience is kind and supportive with enthusiastic applause for all. Audience members put their name in a basket and storytellers are chosen randomly to tell their true story.

Please join us for the fun and refreshments!

**This is a free event sponsored by the Tinmouth Community Fund.
All are welcome!**

Weather permitting we will host an event on the second Friday of each month.

Please follow us on Facebook:
Tinmouth Old Firehouse Concerts & Town Events
Questions: 802-881-6775 (call or text)



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Tinnmouth Road House and Best Moon Catering

(formerly the Tinnmouth Snack Bar)

Will be opening soon.

Please watch Front Porch Forum for details or call Corrie Best at 802-446-9473.

Remember the *“Golden Rule!”*
“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”



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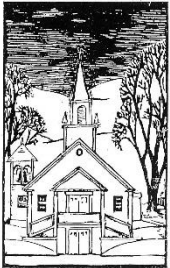
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~ Sandra Day O'Conner*



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Needing a friend to talk with
during these stressful times?
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phone call away.

**Any reason is a good reason to
call: 802-417-1491.**

**2024 Hunting and Fishing
Licenses are available at the
Town Office.
The Town gets \$1.50 for each
license sold.**



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*"Do what you can, with what
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~ Teddy Roosevelt*

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~ January 2024 Calendar of Events ~

New Year's Day	Monday	1st		Town Office ~ Closed
Community Center Board	Tuesday	2nd	7:00	Town Office & Virtual
Fire Department	Thursday	4th	7:00	Fire House
Recreation Committee	Monday	8th	7:00	Town Office & Virtual
Select Board	Thursday	11th	7:00	Town Office & Virtual
Conservation Commission	Monday	15th	7:00	Town Office & Virtual
Pre-Town Meeting	Tuesday	16th	7:00	Old Fire House & Virtual
Planning Commission	Thursday	18th	7:00	Town Office & Virtual
Deadline for Petitions -Articles/Town Meeting	Thursday	18th	5:00	Town Office
Tales of Tinmouth Deadline	Saturday	20th		Don't Miss It!
THGS Meeting	Sunday	28th	2:00	Town Office
Deadline for Petitions – Officers/Town Meeting	Monday	29th	5:00	Town Office

~ February 2024 Calendar of Events ~

Fire Department	Thursday	1st	7:00	Fire House
Select Board	Thursday	8th	7:00	Town Office/Virtual
Planning Commission	Thursday	15th	7:00	Town Office/Virtual
Tales of Tinmouth Deadline	Wednesday	20th		Don't Miss It!

Transfer Station hours are Wednesday 4:00 – 7:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am – noon.

~ **Sunday Church Service ~ 9:00 AM All are welcome! ~**

~ *The Library is open Thursdays 2:00-5:00 PM ~ And the first Saturday of the month, 10-noon.*

Knit? Crochet? Craft? ~ Mondays at the Old Fire House ~ 1:00-3:00 All Welcome! ~

Pre-Town Meeting
Tuesday
January 16th
7:00
Old Fire House
 (next to the Town Office)

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