

Thomaston Board of Finance

June 9, 2009

Present: J. Scheppard, K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, E. Mone, G. Seabourne, D. Colavecchio, M. Galbraith.

Also present: First Selectman Maura Martin, Director of Finance, Sue Smith.

Also: S. Santa Maria, Thomaston Transfer Station Committee, members of the public, press.

1. Call to Order

J. Scheppard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Communications

J. Scheppard read a letter from the Housatonic Valley Association asking if the Town had budgeted funding for a "municipal membership" in the Association.

J. Scheppard noted that no funds have been allocated for such an expenditure

On a motion by E. Mone seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to move

Old Business: Item 6i Transfer Station, to the top of the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

Sal Santa Maria reported that the state is requiring new permits for all Transfer Stations; the Dept. of Environmental Protection will charge an \$800 application fee and an \$800 permit fee.

Mr. Santa Maria noted that the containers at the Transfer Station need to be emptied; this will cost \$1500. S. Smith reported that there is \$73,000 in the Transfer Station budget.

6 ii Fire Dept- No one was present from the Fire Dept.

4. Financial Director's Report

S. Smith reported that Property Tax collections are just below the prior year with 98% collection rate as of May 2009, compared to a 99% collection rate in May 2008.

She reported that the Recreation Dept has submitted \$10,800 to the Town, owing a balance of \$5,000. Marty Egan expects to break even by June 30, 2009.

G. Seabourne asserted that Adult Leagues should be self-funding.

J. Scheppard will ask Mr. Egan for an expense report for programs.

S. Smith noted that the Interest Income line will show a deficit because interest rates have dropped. She also observed that the 2008-2009 Town Budget should break even, if the tax collections stay “on target.”

S. Smith presented the following accounts in deficit:

Board of Finance	\$200.58
Legal	\$4,270.90
Fire Dept. Underground Tank	\$9000.
Fire Dept	\$4000.
Property Tax Rebates	\$3321.49
Fire Marshall	\$6.07

M. Martin noted that the Legal Expense budget will increase because contract negotiations are underway and the cost could be as much as \$15,000.

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O’Sullivan it was voted to move \$200.58 from Account # 9-001-10-142-570-805 to Account # 9-001-10-530-610 to cover the current deficit. Vote: Unanimous

5. Selectman’s Report

M. Martin reported the following:

1. The Town may receive \$75,000 in Energy Conservation Funds, however, discussions are underway and no commitments have been made by the State.
2. M. Martin reported that the Dept of Transportation Inspector is reviewing road projects with Public Works Director Paul Pronovost and the Town may receive \$170,000.
3. Paperwork for the funds for the Altair Avenue bridge project have been processed.

6. Old Business, cont’d

Fire Dept.-Operating Budget Overrun discussion postponed until more information is received.

7. New Business

i. Fire Dept-Underground Tank

J. Scheppard read a memo of May 29,2009 to Selectman Maura Martin from Ken Koval detailing the history of the underground tank and its multiple problems. The project was expected to cost \$7000; it is now expected to cost \$16,000.

A summary of the issues cited in Mr. Koval’s letter:

1. Tank installed in 1995: installation not in compliance with DEP regulations.
2. Dirt with rocks was used as fill on top of tank; should have used sand as required by DEP
3. No secondary containment of piping
4. Capture unit held with clamp and gasket which moved during frost heave
5. No access to underground connections (Manholes have since been installed.)

6. Connections fitted in error; nut was cracked.
7. Kink in pipe; could have deteriorated and caused a spill.
8. Cement sidewalk
9. Cement pad to cover tank

ii. Computer Information System

S. Smith reported that most of the computer upgrades planned for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year have been accomplished at a cost of \$896.53 over the \$40,800 budgeted.

8. Other Business

J. Scheppard reviewed a list of items and issues that the Board of Finance should resolve before the budget deliberations for the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year.

1. Full service transfer station- what will it cost? Should garbage pickup be paid with a user fee similar to a sewer usage fee at a negotiated rate? Must address the education vs. garbage issue.
2. Opera House- Need resolution on the Town's role before the next budget season. Need information by January 1, 2010.
3. Social Services- Can Town deliver social services without a director? Need impact study on the consequences of the loss of this position to the Town.

Other items offered by Board members

4. Pension Reform-Unfunded liability continues to grow.
5. GSB 45 compliance
6. WPCA-Sinking Fund contribution
7. Adoption of Capital Improvement Plan
8. Sick Pay Reserve

8. Public Comment

1. If \$500,000 for trash collection is taken out of budget the Board of Finance will spend it in the "wrong place."
2. What happened to the Teachers' Sick Pay Reserve? Answer: J.S. It was approved at a Town Meeting.
3. Social Services are very important; the former director had a degree in Social Work. The various services she provided will be apportioned out to other offices.
4. How would a group of licensed social workers in Town get permission to volunteer to sustain the services?

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by G. Seabourne, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Marie Galbraith,

Secretary, Thomaston Board of Finance