

Thomaston Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
February 9, 2010

Present: D. Colavecchio (Chairman), G. Seabourne, K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, F. Treglia,
M. Galbraith, S. Turner

Also present: First Selectman Ed Mone, Finance Director Sue Smith, Fire Chief Jamie Wilson,
Transfer Station Committee members S. Santa Maria and B. Bereza, Assessor R. Walcott, Tax
Collector P. Duffy.

Also: Members of the public, press

1. Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

3. Minutes

i.) 1-12-10

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by S. Turner the minutes of the meeting of January 12,
2010 were approved with the following addition: "**Police Budget** – The first of three payouts for
accrued banked holidays and comp time was paid in December; the impact of that payment was
\$26,691.94. That, combined with Police Overtime of a projected \$30,000 for 09/10, will need an
additional appropriation subject to a town meeting. The Board of Finance took no action, hoping that
the Police Dept might realize some savings in other areas of its budget, thereby reducing the amount to
be appropriated." Vote: Unanimous

ii.) 1-27-10

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by S. Turner, the minutes were approved as presented.

Vote: Unanimous

4. Communications

None

8i. New Business: Motion to Move Transfer Station on Agenda

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by S. Turner, it was voted to move Item 8 i.) Transfer Station
Update to the top of the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

S. Santa Maria and B. Bereza reported that the Transfer Station will open on Saturday February 13, 2010.
The card readers have been purchased, the first permit has been sold, the state permit has been
received, the current operator has been approved by the State, contingent upon his acquiring a
Certificate of Training. The Board congratulated and thanked Messrs. Santa Maria and Bereza on their
good work in reopening the Transfer Station.

5. Financial Director's Report

- S. Smith asked when the Board will act on her request to approve the additional \$26,691.94 in pension obligations and \$30,000 in police overtime. The Board will place the items on the agenda of the March 9, 2010 meeting.
- Bond Rating: The Town's rating was upgraded to A+. The bond sale held on Jan 26 got us an interest rate of 3.68 from Robert Baird on the \$7,520,000 bond and the refunding bond of \$2,820,000 came in at 2.166%. The total savings on the refund was \$235,523.33, a portion of which will go to the State of CT. The amount of savings that will be put in the GASB45 trust fund will be \$82,104.58. The remaining savings will be spread throughout the life of the loan to offset the state's reduction in reimbursements on the bond.
- Opera House- the loan balance as of January 31 2009 was \$174,000. This number does not reflect January sales.
- Phone service- this is a very complicated process which will not be decided until July 2010.
- Broker Services and Health Insurance- Request for proposals for both services are being developed.
- Altair Avenue- All of the paperwork for reimbursement from the state has been submitted.

7.ii.) Old Business: Motion to move Property Revaluation up the agenda

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by G. Seabourne, it was voted to move Property Revaluation to the top of the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

Tax Assessor Rae Ann Walcott reported that the RFP for the revaluation has been published. She asked if the Town is planning to postpone the revaluation.

E. Mone explained that he asked the Town's state legislators if the revaluation could be delayed because we do not have a full time assessor and because we will lose the services of Ms. Walcott in June 2010. He stated that his request to the legislators was also precipitated by his concern that the Town was in arbitration regarding the former Tax Assessor and if the Town were to lose, the former assessor could be reinstated. He said postponement of the revaluation "was an option to explore."

Ms. Walcott asked for better communications; if she had known that postponement was "an option to explore," then she would not have put out an RFP. Ms. Walcott said a full time assessor is necessary ; 150 permits have not been properly reviewed, however, they are on the Grand List. Many cars and home additions "have not been picked up. Revenue is being lost." Ms. Walcott submitted two budgets to the Board of Finance reflecting the expenses of the department with either a fulltime or part time assessor.

7.iii.) Old Business: Motion to move Firehouse up the agenda

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by S. Turner, it was voted to move the Firehouse to the top of the agenda.

Chief Wilson reported that he sought 2 additional bids for the replacement of the air handling unit at the Firehouse. The following bids were received: EMCOR \$3970; Pelletier Mechanical Services \$2700; Wesson \$2450. Chief Wilson reported that the Fire Commissioners recommended Pelletier because they

propose installing a better unit than the one proposed by the other vendors and it is more energy efficient and the contractor is from Thomaston. On a motion by M. Galbraith seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to award the replacement of the air handling unit at the Firehouse to Pelletier Mechanical Services at a cost of \$2700 to be funded by taking \$2700 from the Contingency Account # 001-10-142-570-805 and transferring it to the Fire Protection Repairs and Maintenance Account # 001-20-208-520-434. Vote: 5-0-1 with F. Treglia abstaining

6. First Selectman's Report

E. Mone the following:

- The Governor's FY2011 budget includes \$5,985,937 in state aid to Thomaston, which is \$5,017 less than 2010. This number includes the Educational Cost Sharing grant.
- Town won the arbitration dispute between the Town and Local 2001 CSEA-SEIU in the case of the former Assessor who was charged with "falsifying time records" and the "unauthorized use of a Town vehicle."
- Town Attorney recommends that the Town pay for the repair and replacement of the drainage culvert and sewer lateral on the property of B. DePecol on High St. He also recommends that the Town seek easements from all property owners on High St. who have sewer laterals.
- Kenea Park – E. Mone introduced Mary Beth Johns and Dave Reynolds who are seeking the help of the Town to pay for plantings in 10 parks and parklets in Town. They explained that 75% of the interest on the Kenea Fund is used to purchase plant material, however, the cost of paying for the water used in the irrigation system at Kenea Park consumes all of the available funds, approximately \$800 per year. Therefore, the Friends of Kenea Park requested that the Town assume the cost of the water for the irrigation system in the amount of \$800-\$900 per year. The Board said that the request will be considered as part of the budget process.

7. Old Business

i.) GASB 45 Retiree Medical Costs

S. Smith reported that \$82,104 from the savings on the bond sale due to the upgrade of the Town's bond rating will be put into the fund as voted by the Board of Finance .

8. New Business

ii.) Board of Education

On a motion by M. Galbraith, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to reduce the Board of Education budget Account # 001-70-700-570-810 in the amount of \$802,881.78 and reduce the Education Cost Sharing Grant Account # 0-001-330-060-96-700 in the amount of \$802,881.78 for Fiscal Year 2009-2010 to adjust for the funding sources related to the American Resources and Recovery Act of 2009. Vote: Unanimous

iii.) High St. culvert

Discussed under First Selectman's Report; no action taken.

iv.) IT proposals

S. Smith presented four bids for IT services for the Town Hall. The following bids were received:

RKL & Associates: \$9600

Fuss and O'Neill: \$35,491.68

Adnet Technologies \$32,461

Computer Company \$48,048

On a motion by M. Galbraith, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to award the IT services contract to RKL & Associates for Option 1. Vote: unanimous

v.) Auditors' proposals

On a motion by M. Galbraith, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan it was voted to award the Town Audit contract as bid to Kostin Ruffkess & Company. Vote: Unanimous

vii.) Energy Audits Results

No report; audits are still being conducted.

viii.) Budget Review

S. Smith distributed the 2010-2011 budgets and the summary of the budgets. The following departments will be invited to the March 2, 2010 meeting: Library, Police, Fire, Ambulance, Recreation.

9. Member Comment: None

10. Public Comment

1. K. Yost: The Town should seek the easement on the Depecol property before it is sold.

2. S. Santa Maria: Town needs a fulltime assessor; it takes time to review assessments.

Response: Full time assessor will not be able to conduct revaluation.

4. Tax Collector Peg Duffy: Strongly recommended the Town hire a full time assessor.

5. T. Durso: The Town is no better off financially than last year; should strive for a 0% budget increase.

On a motion by S. Turner, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan the meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Marie Galbraith, Secretary

Thomaston Board of Finance