

Thomaston Board of Finance  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 13, 2010

Present: D. Colavecchio (Chairman), G. Seabourne, F. Treglia, M. Galbraith, S. Turner,  
Also present: First Selectmen E. Mone  
Also: Members of the public, press.

**1. Call to Order**

D. Colavecchio called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**8. New Business**

On a motion by S. Turner, seconded by G. Seabourne, it was voted to move **Agenda # 8 item i.) Transfer station update**, to the top of the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

Sal Santa Maria noted that the Public Works Dept has been most helpful in compacting the containers, thereby saving hauling costs. He reported that CRRA was impressed with the number of electronic devices recycled by the Town and has offered to pick them up, thereby saving the Town time and money. Mr. Santa Maria noted that the Transfer Station shows a net loss of \$754 as of 4/13/10. This is due to the lack of users in the first few weeks, a holiday weekend, and low volume on brush intake.

**3. Minutes**

**i.)3-2-10:**

On a motion by S. Turner seconded by F. Treglia, the minutes of the meeting of March 3, 2010 were approved as presented. Vote: Unanimous

**ii.)3-9-10**

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by S. Turner, the minutes of the meeting of March 9, 2010 were approved as presented. Vote: Unanimous

**iii.)3-23-10**

On a motion by S. Turner seconded by F. Treglia, the minutes of the meeting of March 23, 2010 were approved as presented. Vote: Unanimous

**iv.)3-31-10**

On a motion by S. Turner seconded by G. Seabourne, the minutes of the meeting of March 31, 2010 were approved as presented. Vote: Unanimous

**v.)4-7-10**

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by S. Turner, the minutes of the meeting of April 7, 2010 were approved as presented. Vote: Unanimous

**4. Communications**

D. Colavecchio reviewed the following communications:

a. A letter from the Board of Fire Commissioners dated April 6, 2010 advising the Board of Finance that the \$10,000 cut in the Department budget will be taken from the following accounts: heating fuel (\$1,000), vehicle maintenance (\$9,000). The Department will also suspend accepting new trainees because of the lack of fire safety gear. The letter concluded with a request to restore \$10,000 to the budget.

b. A letter from Diane LaBonte, Thomaston resident, requesting that the Board of Finance use a portion of the Fund Balance to reduce the tax burden. The letter also requested that the Board of Finance ask the Town Attorney to offer a legal opinion on the statutory use of the Fund Balance.

The Chairman reported that Mrs. LaBonte's letter had been forwarded to the Town Attorney for his opinion on the matter.

#### **5. Financial Director's Report**

The March Statement of Revenues and Expenditures was distributed to the Board members. First Selectman Ed Mone reported that he had sent a letter to the following departments to notify them that they are "slightly" over budget at this time: Police, Fire, Ambulance.

#### **6. Selectman's Report**

Opera House: E. Mone presented a proposal regarding the operations and finances of the Opera House with the following benchmarks:

1. At the conclusion of each show, revenues should exceed expenses
2. That the Opera House Loan Balance shall not exceed the balance at the start of the Fiscal Year as of July 1, 2010.
3. That the Opera House Loan Balance shall be reduced by \$30,000 by Decembers 31,2010 and by an additional \$15,000 by March 31,2011 and another additional \$15,000 by June 30,2011 totaling \$60,0000 during the fiscal year.

Chairman Colavecchio requested that the Chairman of the Opera House Commission not be present at the next presentation before the Board of Finance.

Minibus: E. Mone reported that the minibus used to transport seniors and others townspeople, is in derelict condition and will need \$8000 in repairs. The Town is not eligible to get a grant for a new vehicle because it does not provide service five days a week.

The town of Woodbury has a bus with a diesel engine for sale at \$18,000. After much discussion, it was decided that the First Selectman will look into other options such as renting a vehicle from Cook Willow.

#### **7. Old Business: none**

#### **8. New Business:**

ii.) Fire Department update

Jim O'Neill and Scott Potter observed that suspending training of new recruits is an "option of last resort." They reported that new trainees require physicals which cost \$150 per person.

They need pagers which cost \$500 each. A new set of pants and a coat costs \$2000.

Other items:

The Board requested that the First Selectman notify the Recreation Director and the Opera House Commission to be present at the next meeting.

Selectman Mone reported that the list of street lights to be eliminated, as well as those that will be added, will be published.

#### **9. Member Comment: None**

#### **10. Public Comment**

1. Diane LaBonte advised that the Opera House was created by Town Ordinance and could be eliminated at a Town Meeting.

Response: G. Seabourne responded that the Commission is needed to manage the Opera House no matter what entity actually runs the Opera House.

Mrs. LaBonte continued:

a. the ladder truck was purchased to protect Plume and Atwood in case of a fire; why not sell the ladder truck now that the company is no longer in business?

b. Does Ken Hopkins, the Town Hall Building Director, need to have lead abatement training because of the new lead abatement ordinance?

c. Fire Department has two funds; how much is in them? Response: Total of \$20,000 in both funds.

d. Do Board of Education members have to live in Town? Response: Yes.

2. Julianne Torrence observed that the Opera House is changing and the Commission tried to “observe the protocols” in presenting its revised FY2011 Budget first to the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Torrence noted that she will be presenting the Opera House budget to the Board of Selectmen on April 20 and to the Board of Finance at its next meeting.

3. E. Mone noted that the Town Meeting on the FY2011 Budget will be held on April 21, 2010 and will be voted to go to referendum on May 3, 2010 at that meeting.

4. K. Yoos: How are Opera House salaries earned in the summer charged to the budget?

5. P. Yoos: Noted he appreciated G. Seabourne’s comments.

On a motion by S. Turner, seconded by F. Treglia, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Marie Galbraith, Secretary

Thomaston Board of Finance