

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

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

Also present: E. Mone, First Selectman; Sue Smith, Finance Director

Also: Library Director D. Radosevich, Library Board President C. Morrison; members of the public, press.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Those present rose to recited the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Minutes

Regular Meeting June 6, 2010

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by G. Seabourne, the minutes of the meeting of June 6,2010 were accepted as presented.

Special Meeting June 15, 2010

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by G. Seabourne, the minutes of the Special Meeting of June 15, 2010 were accepted as presented. On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by S. Turner, it was voted to move item 8.New Business forward on the agenda.

Vote: Unanimous

8. New Business

i.) Library comp/benefits:

Librarian Radosevich and Library Board President C. Morrison explained that the First Selectman recommended that the library staff take the same cuts and furlough that the White Collar Union employees took. They stated that the rationale of the Library Board in not requiring staff to take furlough days and in granting them a raise. They explained that the library staff does not receive the same benefits as the Town Hall employees because they are not part of the bargaining unit. They do receive the same percentage increase, but not the same benefits.

ii.) Transfer Station Update:

Director of Public Works Paul Pronovost reported that Sal Santa Maria, chairman of the Transfer Station Committee, will report on the finances of the project next month when the debit card reader has been installed.

iii.) Road Project Update

Paul Pronovost reported that 1700ft of Old Northfield Road was paved, it funded by a Stimulus Grant. The remainder of Old Northfield Road, Perritt Drive, Kennedy Drive, and View Drive are on schedule for completion this season.

Leigh Avenue was put in Capital Improvements last year because of the wall that is on Town's right of Way; according to Town Attorney Michael Ryback the Town's liability if it fell. If the retention wall fails the residents who live above the wall will have no access to or from their property. The cost of removal is estimated at \$52,000 which is not in the original Road Project budget so it cannot be included in the current road bond. It must be included in the next bond authorization.

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, seconded by G. Seabourne, it was voted appropriate \$53,000

from the General Fund Surplus for the removal and replacement of the retaining wall on the Town right of way on Leigh Avenue subject to approval at a Town Meeting. Vote: Unanimous
The Board requested a revised estimate of the road project going forward as well as variances of budget Vs. actual on completed roads.

iv.)Senior Bus

E. Mone reported that the registration on the bus expires in August and the bus is “red tagged” and not allowed to be used. On a motion by K. Mosimann O’Sullivan, seconded by M. Galbraith it was voted to take \$10,000 from Contingency Account # 1-001-10-142-570-805 and move it to the Capital and Non-Recurring Account # 1-001-90-908-610-956, for the purpose of repairing the senior bus.

Vote:Unanimous

v.) Town Hall data/sewer bonding: no report

vi.)Truck and Tree Removal

On a motion by K. Mosimann O’Sullivan, seconded by G. Seabourne, it was voted to add Tree Removal to the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

E. Mone reported that because the Board of Finance is responsible for vehicles the following issue has been raised for its consideration. Selectman Mone explained that the Town owns a 1993 Ford International Model 2554 VIN # PH469671 which is not roadworthy.

An offer has been made by Higgins Tree Removal to take possession of the truck in exchange for 30 hours (value of \$6000) of tree removal service. The First Selectman recommended the proposal saying there is 30 hours worth of tree removal work in the Town.

On a motion by S. Turner, seconded by K. Mosimann O’Sullivan, it was voted to exchange the 1993 Ford International Model 2554 VIN # PH469671 for 30 hours of tree removal service from Higgins Tree Removal. Vote: Unanimous.

vii.) Town Hall Data and server back up

Finance Director Sue Smith reported that the current tape backup system of all of the data on the Town computers has experienced a series of failures and that action must be taken. After conducting the research, RKL, the Town’s computer support company, recommends that the Town hire Aurora Services at a cost of \$375 per month and a one-time \$500 set up fee to provide off site backup . The service will provide 500 gigabytes of memory.

On a motion by M. Galbraith, seconded by G. Seabourne, it was voted the hire Aurora Services and to move \$5000 from Contingency Account # 1-001-10-142-570-805 to Account # Computer Information Systems Account # 1-100-10-107-520-300.

Vote: Unanimous.

4. Communications

Letter from the First Selectman Ed Mone to the Library Board regarding raises and furlough.

Letter from the Library Director to the Finance Board regarding raises and furlough.

5. Financial Director’s Report

S. Smith reported the following deficit projections for the June 30,2010 budget to date:

Education: projecting a \$470,000 deficit to date to be covered by Special Education excess of \$562,000.

Police: Deficit projection of \$91,962

Fire Dept: Deficit projection of \$2646

Ambulance: Deficit projection \$3450

All other projections are under \$2000.

The Board asked that the Police Dept break out the \$43,197 in payouts of vacation and holidays.

S. Smith reported that the Town is researching new phone and communications systems; current systems are analogue, not digital. E. Mone noted that he does not really know when employees come in or leave work. A new system could be used as a time keeping system.

6. Selectman's Report

i.) Grants: E. Mone reported that grants have been submitted to Homeland Security for generators for the Town's emergency shelters (high school gym and the Fire Department). He has also submitted STEAP grants for the same project. Homeland Security would pay \$25,000 towards each generator leaving a balance of \$74,530 for the high school unit and \$14,820 for the Fire Department unit. The STEAP grant would pay for the balance of funds needed.

ii.) Budget Making Process: E. Mone asked for input from the Board of Finance on the budget and requested that the Board appoint someone, perhaps the Chairman, to "convey the concerns" of the Board of Finance to the Selectmen.

iii.) Nystrom's Pond: E. Mone reported that there is no life guard at the park after 5:00pm yet people continue to use the facility and swim. Neighbors have reported vandalism, rowdy behavior; they are concerned for their safety, the safety of their property, the safety of people who are swimming after hours, and the loss of the peaceful enjoyment of their property.

E. Mone requested \$500-\$700 to pay for personnel to be on site until 7:00pm for the rest of the season. The Board of Finance advised the First Selectman to talk to the Police Department because the behavior described requires police action.

7. Old Business

Opera House: S. Smith reported that the loan balance as of June 30,2010 was \$156,673.

9. Member Comment

G. Seabourne asked the First Selectman if any of the bargaining units had been asked if they were willing to reopen their contracts. E. Mone said he will ask; he is looking for "input" from the Board of Finance.

10. Public Comment

1. Jim Kaniewski observed that Nystrom's residents will donate money to the Town to keep staff at the park until 7:00pm. He noted that the residents who pay taxes are being ignored while people from out of Town are abusing the privilege of using the park.

2. K. Yoos: Regarding the Opera House, consider what Attorney Rybak said.

3. D. LaBonte: How much money is in Contingency?

Answer: S. Smith \$85,000 as of 7-13-10

D. LaBonte: Investigate the garbage options now and don't wait until the budget process begins.

4. T. Durso: What is the average cost of the roads now?

Answer: Don't know. Paul Pronovost will be asked to report on this at the next meeting.

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

Marie Galbraith, Secretary