



Town of Thomaston
Town Hall
158 Main Street
P.O. Box 136
Thomaston, Connecticut 06787
Phone: 860-283-4421 Fax: 860-283-1378

DRAFT

**THOMASTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2015**

Present:

George Seabourne, Mike Madow, Steve Turner and Tom Duffany, Tracy Decker, and First Selectman Ed Mone. Members of the community.

Not in attendance was Luke Freimuth and Frank Treglia.

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Seabourne.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by S. Turner to approve the minutes of April 14, 2015 special meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by T. Duffany. M. Madow abstains. Motion carries 3-0, with one abstention.

New Business/Review Education Budget:

Chairman Seabourne said the Board of Finance looks at three things:

- What was budgeted last year;
- What was expended;
- What is budgeted for 2015-2016

Chairman Seabourne began by looking at the 2015-2016 BOE Master Sheet presented – focusing mostly on those department/school line items that had an increase this year.

(High School) “Homebound/In-School Insurance”, the actual for 2013-2014 was \$4,946 with a town allocation of \$12,622 and 2014-2015 operating budget of \$10,428. They are requesting \$8,428 for 2015-2016.

(High School) “Student Activities – Non-Athletics”, the actual for 2013-2014 was \$55,907 with a town allocation of \$64,367 and a 2014-2015 operating budget of \$63,718. They are requesting \$67,514 for 2015-2016. Expended as of April 1, 2015 was \$39,707. John Perrucci indicated that one staff position was cut, showing a savings this year. However, we are hoping to fill in 2015-2016.

(Athletics) “Director of Athletics/Trainer” , this is for the proposed athletics trainer.

(Central Office) “Social Security” , this line shows savings due to some positions being eliminated (one teacher and three paraprofessionals due to layoff).

(Central Office) “Life Insurance” , savings due to premium cost difference.

(Central Office) “Unemployment”, increase due to unemployment compensation due to layoffs.

(Central Office) “Pension/Non-Teachers” – Tracy Decker indicated that the Town pays and records on their side. The BOE needs to record on their records and that is why the report shows a zero balance.

(Central Office) “Legal Fees” – Chairman Seabourne asked if BOE expects to use the \$45,000 they are requesting, as they have only used \$25,187 to date. Superintendent Coss indicated that they have teacher negotiations coming up soon and feel that is a safe number.

(Central Office) Contracted Service Request”, Chairman Seabourne asked if \$18,400 was needed as BOE only expended \$7,157 to date. Superintendent Coss said yes as this is for the “Info-Snap” program which is a web portal that collects information on every student upon registration. We are hoping our numbers will increase.

(Central Office) “Contracted Services/Substitute Teachers”, this is for Kelly Service fees. They do all the hiring and paperwork for us.

(Special Education) “Contractual Services/Special Ed”, Chairman Seabourne wanted an explanation for the requested amount of \$427,807 (minus the grant of \$62,500) if the fee for PATHS per school year is \$265,000?

(Center School) “Natural Gas”, Chairman Seabourne also wanted to know why there was nothing budgeted for 2015-2016 for the natural gas line for Center School.

(Center School) Rubbish Removal”, Tracy pays monthly, BOE squares up with her at the end.

(Black Rock School) “Electricity”, BOE expended \$31,231, but are requesting \$50,261. Are you expecting to spend this or are you behind on some bills? Both Superintendent Coss and Todd Bendston will review.

(Central Office) “Magnet School Transportation”, Chairman Seabourne wanted to know if BOE expects to use the full \$98,622 which is the full amount of a grant received. They have only expended \$46,111 to date.

(Athletics) “Athletics/Other Travel”, Chairman Seabourne asked what \$2,095 was for. John Perrucci indicated that this is for championship away games (all sports). The BOE pays for the athletes stay.

(Center School) “Instructional Supplies – Software/Licenses”, Chairman Seabourne asked why such an increase in this line from an allocation of \$3,675 in 2014-2015 to \$10,243 in 2015-2016 if we only expended \$950 to date. Superintendent Coss said this is for software licenses for the Chromebooks that were already purchased. John Perrucci opted not to renew with Odyssey software and these are new license

(All Schools) “Instructional Supplies - Teaching”, Superintendent Coss said the teachers requisition for this.

Discussion on other areas as well.

Chairman Seabourne - We don't want you to plan for the worst case scenario – that is what we have a contingency and surplus fund for.

Chairman Seabourne asked for members thoughts on:

PATHS

M. Madow – yes I am in favor of if it helps our students and puts us in the forefront of education. I commend the BOE for doing so.

S. Turner – this is a bright, fresh approach and I agree.

T. Duffany – I agree.

Chairman Seabourne – good way to get costs under control. Gives the BOE a lot of credit for doing so..

Athletic Trainer

The overall consensus is no – not required at this time at a cost of \$23,000. Maybe in future.

S. Turner - \$23,000 is quite a bit of money. Let 911 or the parents handle.

T. Duffancy - \$23,000 can be used better.

M. Madow – coming from an environmental background, I think it is a good idea.

NVCC Proposal – CNA/EMR Training

S. Turner – I like the idea and am in favor.

M. Madow – BOE is doing a fine job looking at things to benefit our students. Looking at from financial aspect, it is a win/win.

T. Duffany – a great idea.

Chairman Seabourne asked Francine Coss for clarification on all items addressed in the budget. We will take up at our next regular meeting.

Finance Director's Report:

Read “Fund Balance Analysis” we should be cautious re: BOF policy.

Old Business – none.

Communications – none.

Financial Director's Report:

Tracy read the “Fund Balance Analysis” report and indicated we should be cautious re: BOF policy. Chairman Seabourne asked Tracy to give us an idea over the last 2-3 year period what we have been using.

Selectman's Report – none.

Member Comment:

S. Turner wanted to thank the BOE for coming out tonight and all its hard work.

Chairman Seabourne said it is very refreshing to have a real conversation with Superintendent, Todd and BOE about their finances.

Public Comment:

D. Labonte questioned whether or not the BOF gave their approval on the PATHS program and associated costs. Chairman Seabourne said no, we just wanted to go on record as to whether or not we agree with the program. BOE must put in for expenses and show offsets.

T. Durso – why did schools go with sub service. Cheaper for substitutes, we pay Kelly, Kelly pays them. We don't have to pay benefits.

C. Doyle – daughter took CAN with Mary Reynolds years ago and is successful now.

R. Fainer – thanked BOE for their support.

D. Labonte – sewer assessment, water why higher at high school

Chairman Seabourne said we can check with WPCA. They have the numbers.

A motion was made by S. Turner to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Motion was seconded by M. Madow. Motion carries 4-0.