

Town of Thomaston
Special Budget Meeting
Tuesday February 22, 2011, 7:00pm

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

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

Also: Supt. of Schools Lynda Mitchell; School Finance Director Sue Laone; Laurie Barrett, Chair, Thomaston Board of Education; John Perucci, Principal, Thomaston High School; Ann Uberti, Principal, Black Rock School and Thomaston Middle School; Alisha Lyons, Vice Principal Thomaston Middle School; Nancy Schyler, Director of Pupil Personnel; Tim Polowy, Thomaston School Technical Coordinator

Also: members of the public, press

1. Call to Order:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose to recite the Pledge.

3. Board of Education Budget 2011-2012

The Chairman opened the discussion by reviewing the decline in personnel in Town departments over the last four to five years by reciting the following figures:

Public Safety staff: 2006-14; 2010-11

Public Works staff: 2006-10; 2010-6

Social Services: 2007-1.7; 2010-0

Education: 2007-95; 2010-160.7

The Chairman reported that the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes program) has been cut in Governor's 2012 budget which will result in a loss of \$331,800 in revenue to the Town.

The Chairman then called on the Superintendent of Schools Lynda Mitchell and Schools Finance Director Sue Laone to present the proposed 2011-2012 Education Budget.

Superintendent Linda Mitchell and Finance Director Sue Laone presented the proposed Thomaston Public Schools Budget 2011-2012 of \$14,272,928 which reflects an increase of \$337,590 which is 2.42% more than the current year budget of \$13,740,752. They gave a detailed report on the positions which will be cut, and their efforts to cut Special Education costs by mainstreaming students. They noted that the total school enrollment will decrease by 20-30 students. They reported that 13 eighth grade students are currently going to schools out of town.

They also reviewed the improvements to the schools through the efforts of the Black Rock School and Thomaston Middle School administrators and the Thomaston High School Principal.

4. Communications:

The Chairman reported that the Ambulance Corps has requested \$7,000- \$12,000 in call money.

5. Member Comment:

George Seabourne thanked the Superintendent Mitchell and Sue Laone for their work on the budget, stating that proposed budget was "a good budget."

6. Public Comment:

At the request of the Board, Superintendent Mitchell introduced members of the School Board and staff who are named above as present.

1. Principal John Perrucci, Thomaston High School, responded to the comment regarding the proposed budget by stating that it is not a “good budget”; it is restrictive. He noted that the high school is behind in its technology. He pointed out that the proposed budget is a “necessary budget, not a good budget.”
2. Ray Taylor: Said that the “worst of all evils” is crime in the town. The safety of the town is the highest priority.
3. Lucy Santopietro, member of the Board of Education: Agreed that the proposed budget is a “necessary budget.” She noted that what is cut is never returned; teachers have been cut, class sizes are getting bigger and (state) mandates are hard to fulfill without the staff to carry out the mandates.
4. Tony Durso: Announced that he “will not go against the Board of Education budget.” He will be looking at the total budget, the total increase.

On a motion by S. Turner, seconded by K. Mosimann O’Sullivan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Marie Galbraith
Secretary, Thomaston Board of Finance