

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Thomaston Board of Finance
October 13, 2009**

Present: J. Scheppard, E. Mone, G. Seabourne, D. Colavecchio, M. Galbraith, K. Mosimann O'Sullivan
Also present: First Selectman Maura Martin
Members of the public, press

1. Call to Order

J. Scheppard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of August 11, 2009

On a motion by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan seconded by D. Colavecchio it was voted to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 8, 2009 with the following change; remove the number \$298,000 from the Sick Pay Reserve Account report. Vote: Unanimous

Minutes of the September 10, 2009

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by G. Seabourne it was voted to approved the minutes of the meeting of Regular Meeting of September 9, 2009. Vote: Unanimous

Minutes of October 6, 2009

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan it was voted to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on October 6, 2009. Vote : Unanimous

3. Communications

J. Scheppard reported that he received the following communications;

1. Thomaston's Blueprint for Young Children and Their Families, a study of education and demographics in the town prepared by Paul Johnston, Principal of Black Rock School

4. Financial Director's Report; no report

6. Old Business

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan it was voted to move

Old Business i. Transfer Station to the top of the agenda. Vote: Unanimous

Sal Santa Maria reviewed a variety of proposals to open the Transfer Station:

1. Annual cost to run Transfer Station: \$106,000 with additional fixed costs of \$20,000 labor, ighway dept. overtime for compacting, permit fee, brush, electricity) , new scale \$25,000.

G. Seabourne made a motion to open the Transfer Station with a scale. The motion was not seconded and the motion failed.

S. Santa Maria asserted that the cost to open the Transfer Station and accept only household items described on the Fee Schedule, such as televisions and furniture, but not demolitions materials would at a cost of \$4500.

M. Galbraith made a motion, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan to open the Transfer Station to accept the household items on the Fee Schedule but no demolition materials at a cost of \$4500.

Vote: Motion failed: 2 in favor (Galbraith, Mosimann O'Sullivan) 4 opposed (Scheppard, Seabourne, Mone, Colavecchio).

On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to open the Transfer Station and to accept demolition materials, with the Fee Schedule as presented and a long term plan to purchase a scale at a cost not to exceed \$7500, subject to approval at a Town Meeting.

Vote: Unanimous

ii. Curbside Pickup- S. Santa Maria presented a cost analysis for curbside pickup.

iii. Opera House- Aaron Thibault, President of the Opera House Commission, reported that the debt has grown significantly because over \$40,000 in invoices were found in the last month. All of the outstanding invoices should be known at this time. In spite of this setback, the Opera House staff is working hard with great results; 380 people attended the opening night of the Wedding Singer and the cost of the production was \$2000 under budget. Daily deposits are now being made. A piano concert was cancelled.

Mr. Thibault reported that the Commission is now focusing on raising revenue. He observed that having four employees is not sustainable given the income and expenses of the operation. He believes that additional revenue could be earned by bringing in low cost, high revenue events. He reported that the loan balance to the town is now \$231,553.

iv. WPCA Sinking Fund- Tom Mueller, Chair of the WPCA, discussed the plan to establish a Capital Improvement Fund in addition to the Sinking Fund which is used for repair and replacement of equipment and minor projects such as the pump stations. The Capital Improvement Fund of \$250,000 will be used to fund large scale projects.

On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by E. Mone, it was voted to approve the Sinking Fund/ Capital Improvement Policy of the WPCA. Vote: Unanimous

v. Capital Improvement Policy- T. Mueller reported that he will send language for review by the Capital Improvements Committee to be included in the proposed plan to fund capital projects. The Capital Improvements Policy will address bonding limits, debt limits, and the WPCA Capital Fund as well. The policy must be approved at a Town Meeting.

vi. GASB45 Fund- Selectman Martin reported that the Board of Selectmen will vote to establish the OPEB Trust.

vii. Pension Reform – M. Martin reported that she is waiting for the pension attorney to review and revise the policy.

viii. Property Revaluation- M. Martin reported that she will check with the Assessor on the status of revaluation.

7. New Business

i. TFD Engine 3- Fire Chief Jamie Wilson reported that Engine 3 needs \$8900 to repair the pump and no one will guarantee the job because of the age and condition of the truck. A proposal to purchase a combined Rescue and Pumper had been proposed at a cost of \$450,000-\$500,000.

A Pumper would cost \$375,000 and a Rescue truck would cost \$300,000-\$400,000.

J. Scheppard reported that he would not make a recommendation that any more money be spent now. Chief Wilson noted that the body on the Engine is good, the water tank and engine have been replaced, however, they don't make tires for that truck any longer. The Rescue truck is scheduled for replacement in 2016.

Board of Education-J. Scheppard reported that the Board of Education has concluded its negotiations and the changes were sent to the Board of Finance for its information.

5. Selectman's Report- M. Martin reported that 3 of the 4 town contracts have been settled. The following departments have agreed to a zero percent wage increase: police, white collar, and sewer. Private duty for police time will not be pensionable.

8. Public Comment

1. Tony Durso: Asked for a copy of the schools study.

Answer: It will be sent to him.

2. Mr. Yost: The town should pass an ordinance to close down the Opera House; town keeps paying bills while people are being laid off.

3. Al Rossi: Town should develop two plans:

1. To set the Opera House on a successful path over the next 5 years.

2. To conduct a feasibility study to unravel the complex situation by examining the possibility of contracting out the work to a non-profit organization that is separate from the town.

3. Julieanne Torrence: It is a new day for the Opera House; the Commission and the Town are working together to sort out the problems.

4. Aaron Thibault- There has been a long history of pain; the Opera House has turned the corner.

5. Mike Madow- Encouraged buy contract agreements negotiated by Maura Martin and Jerry Scully. The proposed ordinance for the police extra-duty pay to be removed from the town pension is a windfall for the town.

On a motion by M. Galbraith, seconded by D. Colavecchio, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15pm.

Marie Galbraith, Secretary
Thomaston Board of Finance

