



TOWN of
THOMPSON
BOARD OF FINANCE

Minutes: Budget Meeting
Thursday, March 31, 2016
Thompson Library/Community Center
7:00 PM

p. 1 of 3

Chairman Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

- I. Roll call
 - A. Members Present: Jim Bellavance, Ray Faucher, Jr., Larry Groh, Jr., Aaron McGarry, Rhonda Rooney, Susanne Witkowski.
 - B. Members Absent: None.
 - C. Staff Present:
Tina Fox, Recording Secretary
Orla McKiernan-Rafferty, Finance Director
 - D. Also Present: Members of the Public.
- II. Correspondence
 - A. Invoice related to school oil clean-up via email.
 - B. Information from Thompson Historical Society.
 - C. Email from Rene Morin regarding a tax sale.
 - D. Information about Building Official sent via email from First Selectman.
 - E. Email regarding potential solar farm.
 - F. Information from Building Official's secretary.
 - G. Inventory of rolling stock for Town of Thompson.
- III. Citizen's Comments
 - A. A. McGarry stated that citizen's comments will be limited to three minutes per person.
 - B. Joe Lindley read a letter aloud regarding the Thompson Historical Society.
 - C. Evan B., stated that he has been a resident for 25 years and feels as if money could be better spent in the school system. He asked with the Town pays for cell phones, and stated that it seems like money could be spent elsewhere. He stated that he has been out of high school for eight years, and even then felt that money was being mismanaged.
 - D. Lisa Sharpe, Blain Rd., stated that the Fire Marshal's salary was discussed at the last meeting. She stated that she does not know how that job is checked-up on, but another resident has left numerous calls and messages for him with no response regarding a fire zone issue. L. Groh, Jr. stated that if someone is trying to contact the Fire Marshal, they should direct their question to the First Selectman. Lee Post, Building Official, stated that residents can call his department with questions for the Fire Marshal.
 - E. Al Landry, 33 Randall Rd., stated that the Town needs more money in the roads. He stated that the Town will one day have to start re-building roads, at a cost of over one million dollars per mile. He stressed that public safety is important.

- F. Paul Baer, Thompson Rd., stated that the Fire Marshal is supposed to have inspection reports for the Library and Housing Authority, but those buildings do not have inspection reports. He asked if the BOF is in compliance with statute 10-222. He stated that any foreign corporation is supposed to file with the Secretary of State to stay licensed in CT, and the Town has hired numerous contractors not licensed in CT, including Green Environmental. He asked how the due diligence was performed when hiring Green Environmental, who recommended the company, and how were they found. He presented a photo (which depicted the front of a Holiday Inn) of the corporate headquarters of a company the Town was going to sign a contract with. He stated that Hi-Tech Environmental worked in Town Hall to clean up a mold problem in the duct work. He presented a photo of a Hi-Tech Environmental employee working in the ducts in the Tax Office wearing no safety equipment, with a Town employee sitting in the room. P. Baer requested that the BOF not even consider taking money from the Tourtellotte Trust. He stated that anyone thinking of making donations to the Town would be set-back if they find out what is happening to 65 Main St. He stated that the Inland Wetlands Commission legal fees were reported a \$0 year-to-date at the previous meeting, but the actual number is close to \$7,500. He stated that the previous Town Clerk thought it was appropriate to record copies of deeds, which is illegal, and now the Town is facing legal problems. He stated that there are invoices signed by only one Selectman, and they are supposed to be signed by multiple members of the Board.

IV. Budget Workshop

- A. K. Beausoleil presented information regarding the Probate Court. On page 32, Department 1701: Town Counsel, K Beausoleil requested that Line 522031 (Legal Labor) be increased from \$12,500 to \$32,500 to accommodate for union contract negotiations. **There was a consensus amongst Board members to increase Line 522031 on page 32 from \$12,500 to \$27,500.**
- B. Fire Departments: Bob Holdsworth, of the Holdsworth Group, presented a report to the Board explaining collections for ambulance services. J. Bellavance asked about the possibility of reducing the number of fire departments in Thompson. K. Beausoleil answered that because the fire departments are independently owned, the only way the Town can put constraints on the fire departments is to de-fund them.
- C. Emergency Management: K. Beausoleil stated that \$2,000 was added to the budget for each the Director and Assistant Director, and when asked, stated that the department did not request that increase, but rather the BOS requested the increase.
- D. Cemeteries: R. Faucher, Jr. asked about the decrease, to which K. Beausoleil stated that Leo Adams believed that the proposed budget is enough.
- E. Snow Removal: K. Beausoleil requested that Line 533060 (Salt and Sand) on page 68 be increased an additional \$5,000. No change was made.
- F. Building Official: L. Post, Building Official, stated that in 2013, his salary was approved to be approximately \$53,000, which was never given to him. S. Witkowski stated that the minutes provided to the Board indicate that the \$53,000 salary was to include benefits. There was discussion amongst the Board as to whether that amount did or did not include benefits.
- G. Building Board of Appeals: K. Beausoleil stated that \$5 is requested in this budget to keep the department as a placeholder.
- H. General Services: R. Faucher, Jr. asked what the Thames Valley Council for Community Action is, to which K. Beausoleil explained that it includes services such as Meals-on-Wheels. The Board briefly discussed the TEEG line item.

- I. Library Administration: Alison Boutaugh was asked about a comment she made last year regarding volunteer services at the Library. She explained that the Library routinely uses volunteers, but not for positions that have job descriptions, and that State standards indicate that volunteers should not be used to replace paid employees. Steve Herbert, Selectman, stated that the budget being presented is not what the BOS agreed to, that it is the Library's proposal, and that he was told the BOS could not make changes to the Library budget.
- J. Historical Society: The Board briefly discussed the added line item for heat at the Historical Society.
- K. Recreation Commission: The Board discussed the Ice Skating Hockey Grant and the Meeting and Fees lines. S. Witkowski asked if the Board could see a report on the revolving account, to which O. McKiernan-Rafferty agreed to provide.

V. Adjourn

- A. **Susanne Witkowski moved and Larry Groh, Jr. seconded the motion to adjourn.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr. – Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

- B. A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 9:04 PM.

Tina Fox
Recording Secretary