



# *TOWN of THOMPSON*

## *BOARD OF FINANCE*

### **Minutes: Special Budget Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 25, 2016**

**Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall**

**8:30 PM (or immediately following referendum results)**

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Chairman Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 9:05 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. Set Mill Rate for Fiscal Year 2016/2017 if Applicable

- A. No action taken, as the Referendum did not pass.

#### III. Budget Workshop if Applicable

- A. R. Faucher, Jr. left the room at 9:07 PM, and O. McKiernan-Rafferty entered at 9:08 PM.
- B. S. Witkowski stated that she is disgusted with the individuals who stole the "Vote Yes" signs from private property that the PTO paid for.
- C. R. Faucher, Jr. entered the meeting again at 9:11 PM.
- D. K. Beausoleil stated that he was on the phone with the Town Attorney who felt that question number 3 regarding the \$373,000 to pay vendors for the remediation for the two oil spills should remain on the ballot, and because of the confusion, the other three resolutions should be left off the ballot and voted on at a later date. The Board discussed the questions but took no action at this time.
- E. R. Rooney suggested increasing the tax revenue, as per a recommendation from Rene Morin, Tax Collector. **There was a consensus amongst Board members to include as revenue an additional \$10,000 in prior year taxes, \$5,000 in interest and liens, and \$20,000 in supplemental MVT.**
- F. The Board discussed the updated budget numbers from the State. **There was a consensus amongst Board members to add an additional \$98,000 to revenue received from the State.**
- G. The Board discussed reducing the Economic Development Coordinator line from \$75,000 to \$50,000. During this discussion, S. Witkowski stated that Norampac is closing and moving out of Thompson, to which Rene Morin confirmed that Norampac is Thompson's second highest taxpayer. No action was taken at this time.

- H. The Board again discussed what to do about the various resolutions/questions on the ballot. **There was a consensus amongst Board members to keep question 3 regarding the loan for \$373,000 for remediation costs on the ballot, remove all of the other resolution questions from the ballot (loans for the sweeper, old library roof, and repairs/building improvements to the school) so that they could be voted on at a later date, remove \$60,947 from debt service (this dollar amount represents the debt service for the loans being removed), and include \$60,947 in contingency to cover the debt service related to those loans that would be voted on at a later date.** The Board was in agreement that this particular action did not change the proposed mill rate.
- I. R. Faucher, Jr. brought up the Library budget, and mentioned that Dudley, MA has a demographic almost identical to Thompson, and runs a library with 60% of the labor of Thompson's library. He suggested reducing the Library Administration budget by a further \$25,000. He stated that he is prioritizing the needs of the Town in that safe roads, an effective Town government, and the school are more important than the Library. The Board discussed this proposal. **There was a consensus amongst the Board (with A. McGarry disagreeing) to reduce the total Library Administration budget by a further \$25,000 to a total of \$353,240.**
- J. The Board discussed the Recreation Department budget, particularly how their surplus account works, but took no action on the discussion.
- K. S. Witkowski stated that the Secretary/Clerk position in the Selectmen's Office is currently vacant, and suggested to remove the 2.25% increase from that position. **There was a consensus amongst the Board to remove the 2.25% increase for the Secretary/Clerk position in both the Selectmen's Office and Highway Department budget.**
- L. Regarding the Economic Development Coordinator, J. Bellavance suggested funding a study at \$40,000 to figure out what Thompson has to offer before hiring someone to promote Thompson. The suggestion was to reduce the \$75,000 included for the Economic Development Coordinator to \$40,000 to be used for an extensive study. There was not a consensus to make this reduction. The suggestion was amended to reduce the amount from \$75,000 to \$50,000. **There was a consensus amongst the Board (with S. Witkowski and L. Groh, Jr. disagreeing) to reduce the Economic Development Coordinator from \$75,000 to \$50,000 to be used for a study.**
- M. R. Faucher, Jr. suggested introducing \$127,000 back into the school budget to represent the \$127,000 loan that would not be on the next Referendum's ballot. **\$127,000 was added back into the school budget, to represent that loan amount.** The Board discussed removing \$200,000, \$100,000 or \$50,000 from the school budget. There was not a consensus to remove \$200,000 or \$100,000 from the school budget. **There was a consensus amongst the Board (with J. Bellavance and R. Faucher, Jr. disagreeing) to remove \$50,000 from the school budget.**
- N. The Board discussed reducing the school budget by a further \$150,000 or \$75,000. There was not a consensus to remove \$150,000 from the school budget. **There was a consensus amongst the Board (with J. Bellavance and L. Groh, Jr. disagreeing) to remove a further \$75,000 from the school budget.** The overall effect to the school budget (after adding \$127,000 to represent the proposed loan amount and removing \$50,000 and \$75,000) was an increase of \$2,000 over the dollar amount voted on at the first Referendum. This brought the proposed mill rate increase to 1.3, for a total mill rate of 26.09.

- O. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to send the total proposed budget of \$25,342,486 to Town Meeting.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- No

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

**The motion carried.**

- P. S. Witkowski requested that the Referendum be held from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM, rather than Noon to 8:00 PM. It was discussed that the Town Attorney advised that in order for the Referendum to begin at 6:00 AM, it must be voted on at Town Meeting and included on the Town Meeting agenda.

- Q. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Ray Faucher, Jr. seconded the motion to put question number 3 as it is stated ("Shall the Town of Thompson appropriate \$373,000 for the oil spill remediation projects and authorize the issue of bond notes and obligations in the same amount to finance the appropriation?") to Town Meeting.**

Jim Bellavance- Yes

Ray Faucher, Jr.- Yes

Larry Groh, Jr.- Yes

Aaron McGarry- Yes

Rhonda Rooney- Yes

Susanne Witkowski- Yes

**The motion carried unanimously.**

- R. It was decided that a similar BOF meeting will be held on June 9<sup>th</sup> after the second Referendum, with an addition of "Citizen's Comments" to the agenda.

#### IV. Adjourn

- A. **Larry Groh, Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski 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 11:59PM.

Tina Fox  
Recording Secretary