



**TOWN of THOMPSON**  
**Board of Finance - Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 6, 2022**  
**Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall**  
**And via Zoom from remote locations**

1. The call to order by Chair A. McGarry was at 7:03 PM.

Roll call: Aaron McGarry, Steve Herbert, Rob Mann, Dave Johnson, Robert Werge Absent: Laurent Guillot  
First Selectman Amy St Onge, Melinda Smith (Superintendent of Schools), Bill Steglitz (Finance Director),  
Joseph Tkacik, Jr (Public Works Director), Kaylee Beck (Schools Liaison), Michelle Giammarinaro (HR Director),  
Alison Boutaugh (Library Director), Bill Birch (Director of School Facilities), Board/Commission members and  
members of the public. Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

2. Approval of Minutes:

**Motion S. Herbert/R. Werge to approve the 03-30-2023 Regular Meeting minutes carried unanimously.**

3. Correspondence:

After the Agenda was posted: Tax Collector's March year-to-date monthly report

-04-06-2023 through the BOF Contact portal- Tricia Turbert, Fabian Road. Subject "Education Budget"

4. Citizens' comments – three minutes per person maximum:

**\*\* Chair A, McGarry** reminded all present that Citizens' Comments are held to one comment per person of a duration of 3 minutes, in order for the Board of Finance to be able to hear from all members of the public who wish to speak; the Budget Workshop will then be the BOF focus.

**\*\* R. Werge** noted the *Contact the BOF* opportunity on the town website; comments posted there are emailed to the BOF members. **S. Herbert** confirmed: the comments could be available in the town hall

- Kristine Durocher, 5 Fernwood Avenue (not present; comments were read aloud)- supports budget

- Kathleen Herbert (BOE Chair) confirmed that since the anticipated grant for the HVAC project did not come through, it is on hold

- Bill Warner, Lowell Davis Road, clarified: in Round Two of HVAC grants, Thompson may qualify.

-Sara Desjarlais, Pompeo Road, noted Special Education needs, supports the budget

---

5. Budget Workshop: Time stamp 7:12 PM

**\*\* Chair McGarry** asked Schools Facilities Director Bill Birch to review the details of the HVAC Grant application and process as well as the current equipment status.

**\*\* Finance Director B. Steglitz:** detailed the ramifications of not being able to Bond 3 matters simultaneously, and possible ways to move ahead.

**\*\* Chair A. McGarry** asked First Selectman A. St Onge to introduce the guest at the BOF meeting.

Lt Russell Cote discussed details of the Resident State Trooper program, (Line 241 Public Safety)

**\*\* Among Lt. Cote's comments:**

- a Resident Trooper is armed, is on site all the time, can be proactive, spot trends, address quality of life matters such as noise/disturbances, spot DUI or cell-phone usage while driving. This individual is in addition to the current State Police patrol schedule. Currently, service is reactive to a call that comes in.

- the Trooper's presence has an impact; opportunities for law-breaking are perceived to be reduced

- with available State and Federal grants, overtime pay can be covered, allowing for patrolling at certain times/days, thus being pro-active in anticipating heightened Trooper need. The Rural Roads grant might cover pay for staying later following an incident/accident, for example. The Trooper, who knows the town and pending issues, writes the grant application.

- all of the resources of the State Police accompany a Resident State Trooper, including on-site extra staff when needed. Shifts can be swapped in anticipation of need.
- although staffing at Troop D is lower than ideal, the number of cars on the road remains constant, utilizing overtime when needed
- a Thompson Trooper is not necessarily from Troop D staff; it is a state-wide, competitive process
- scheduling options for a Trooper are varied, with the town's needs in mind, and can be adjusted by time of year or certain events. Frequently, a day shift is selected, covering traffic issues, school hours and heavy- truck patrolling, often on a rotating 5-days-on, 3-days-off plan (providing hours on some weekends). The Trooper and School Security would develop inter-relationships.

Discussion:

- \*R. Mann noted that a 2-year contract (and obligation) is being considered
- \*S. Herbert reviewed the overwhelming support of a Resident State Trooper in the town survey (70%)
- \*A. St Onge added that if approved, the search process may not result in the position being filled until into the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the year.
- \* R. Werge: consider posing a separate question to the voters at the referendum, asking if a Resident State Trooper is favored (yes/no) making it clear that the commitment is for 2 years for a total of \$400K
- \* R. Mann: the BOF could make this recommendation to the BOS for their vote

**Motion D. Johnson seconded by R. Werge to pose to the town at the referendum, as a separate question (with language to be determined by the town attorney), a yes/no vote of support for a Resident State Trooper (a 2-year contract for a total of \$400,000, with a mil rate impact of .26 in FY 23-24), carried unanimously, 5-0.**

Steve Herbert- yes Rob Mann- yes Dave Johnson – yes Robert Werge- yes Aaron McGarry- yes

Questions were asked of the Director of Public Works, Joe Tkacik: Time stamp 7:50 PM

The level of maintenance required for the current loader is on-going, with recurring electrical problems, sometimes resulting in failure to start, requiring hired outside technicians. Detailed discussion followed.

**Motion D. Johnson seconded by A. McGarry to remove \$217K (Loader) from the proposed Capital budget, and instead after July 1, 2023 enter into a 5-year Lease-to-Own agreement.**

Discussion: \* D. Johnson: 3 other leases will be closed

- \* S. Herbert noted the thousands of dollars in interest charges that would be incurred
- \* R. Werge- consider financing the 9-ton truck at \$60K (other debts being retired), and possibly wait one-year on the loader; D. Johnson suggested financing both. \* Finance Director: this would move the line items from the current proposal and into the next fiscal year, with payments to begin in 2025. Legal Council may be asked to clarify the process. R. Werge: the expenditure should be visible to the voters now, as an encumbrance for future years. **Motion failed, 2 yes-3 no**

Steve Herbert- no Rob Mann- no Dave Johnson – yes Robert Werge- no Aaron McGarry- yes

**Motion A. McGarry seconded by R. Mann to remove \$217K from the budget (Loader) carried, 4-1.**

Steve Herbert- yes Rob Mann- no Dave Johnson – yes Robert Werge- yes Aaron McGarry- yes

**Motion R. Werge seconded by R. Mann to remove \$240,809 (9-ton truck) from the budget and change it to a 7-year Lease-to-Own agreement. After discussion: Motion carried, 3 yes-2 no.**

Steve Herbert- no Rob Mann- yes Dave Johnson – no Robert Werge- yes Aaron McGarry- yes



**TOWN of THOMPSON**  
**Board of Finance - Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 6, 2022**  
**Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall**  
**And via Zoom from remote locations**

**Motion D. Johnson seconded by R. Mann to remove \$72,856, Town Hall parking lot paving, from the Capital Budget.** Discussion: A. St Onge sees the extreme disrepair, the negative public image just as economic growth is being sought, and the fact of non-ADA compliance. The Director of the DPW noted that this project is at an unusually low cost, as the contractors will already be in town for another project. **Motion carried, 3 yes-2 no. Steve Herbert- no Rob Mann- yes Dave Johnson – yes Robert Werge- no Aaron McGarry- yes**

Capital Plan discussion: Road repaving projections: \$889,380 subcontracted on the west side of town, plus \$300K for roads that are recently paved but await the top coating. East side of town, the highway staff and crews handle that work. Discussion: the roads that lead to the Trail System are under review, and a complete drainage study may be needed. The projected cost estimates were requested.

MS4 Retrofit: this municipal stormwater management plan (Unfunded mandate) requires “disconnection to catch basins” of surface water, permitting absorption; water is not permitted to drain into active waterways or wetlands. Next year: the construction phase, with DEEP engineers on site to monitor.

Library Maintenance: in the previous discussion, bathroom repairs due to vandalism were not listed.

**Motion D. Johnson seconded by S. Herbert to reduce Line 696, Health and Life Insurance, by \$11K.** The budget was prepared expecting a 12% increase but needs about 10%. **Motion carried, 5-0. Steve Herbert- yes Rob Mann- yes Dave Johnson –yes Robert Werge- yes Aaron McGarry- yes**

Property Revaluation: R. Werge- the current Assessor’s legwork will make a difference in the cost

Other: review of Revenue, including Fire Marshal fees (projects doubling) and discontinuation of Schools Transportation Grant. The Transfer Station Committee recommend increases which are reflected in the budget, but the BOS is moving cautiously on that matter.

Note was made that April school break is next week, at the time in the Budget Workshops when the Education budget will be reviewed. Possible additional dates were posed for BOF meetings, keeping in mind the firm timeline which has been established by the BOS for getting the Budget accepted at a BOS meeting, getting the legal notices out in time for the scheduled town meeting and the referendum.

**6. Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Werge to adjourn carried unanimously.**

Chair A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 9:23 PM.

To access ZOOM to see and hear this meeting, click on this link or copy/paste it to your Search bar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4E\\_f9TwRwZxpHOYp4lBnJ0vSBZSsSU\\_bfU\\_5vypexd5rySoUlszvC9NVqupdkc5l.XRLBvf0g--LQiNDd](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4E_f9TwRwZxpHOYp4lBnJ0vSBZSsSU_bfU_5vypexd5rySoUlszvC9NVqupdkc5l.XRLBvf0g--LQiNDd) Passcode: @?Ekw5=x

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

*These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Finance. Please refer to next month’s meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.*