



TOWN of THOMPSON
Board of Finance - Minutes
Thursday, March 10, 2022
Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall
And via Zoom from remote locations

1. The call to order by Chair Aaron McGarry was at 7:01 PM, with all BOF members present
Roll call: Aaron McGarry, Steve Herbert, Rob Mann, Laurent Guillot, Dave Johnson, Robert Werge.
First Selectman Amy St Onge, Michelle Giammarinaro (HR Director), Guy Lapointe (Interim Finance Director), Jamie Seney (Fire Marshal), Kathleen Herbert (Chair, BOE), Renee Waldon (Town Clerk), Board/Commission members. Members of the public. Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

2. Approval of Minutes:

a. **Motion L. Guillot seconded by R. Werge to approve the 02-17-2022 Regular Monthly Meeting minutes carried unanimously.**

b. **Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Mann to approve the 03-03-2022 Budget Presentation/Workshop minutes carried unanimously, noting that in Item #8, Kathleen Herbert is actually the Secretary of the Tourtellotte Board of Trustees**

3. Correspondence:

- Invitation to event celebrating finding the original 100-year-old tax document
- Superintendent Melinda Smith 03-03-2022 memo & 2022-2023 BOE Budget proposal
- Budget documents from the Library, Town and the BOE
- The 2020-2021 annual audit, emailed 03-05-2022, with paper copies being prepared
- Tax Collector's 02-28-2022 and YTD Reports

After the agenda was posted:

- BOS budget summary page and additional columns: increase/decrease dollar amounts/percentages
- DPW Fire Alarm replacement and Roll-off containers price quotes

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

-John Sharpe, Laurel Ave: asked why the proposed Fire Departments budget includes \$65,000 for the Community Fire Department, while the other Departments are proposed to be funded to \$75,000. He cited Community Fire's service area as having the highest population (50% of the town) and highest density with a great deal of multi-family housing. In addition, the schools, churches, town structures and historic buildings, some being considered for residential/commercial uses, are all in their service area.

5. New Business:

a. New fire alarm monitoring system at the public works garage, not to exceed \$28,000.

A. St Onge: The system is not operational, is obsolete and can't be repaired, and is not up to OSHA standards. A new alarm system will need to go out to bid. The BOS requests that the BOF fund a replacement fire alarm system. The BOF members asked several questions. The Contingency Fund has not been utilized this year and stands at \$30,000.

Motion D. Johnson seconded by S. Herbert to fund the replacement of the Fire Alarm System at the DPW facility, not to exceed \$28K, to be taken from the Contingency Fund, carried unanimously.

R. Werge- yes D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

b. Two roll off containers for the transfer station, not to exceed \$23,000: BOF Discussion- should the town acquire 2 heavy-duty Roll Off Trucks or should it be one lighter duty and one heavy duty? It was noted that the DPW this year sold surplus equipment, realizing \$23K after fees. A. St Onge will ask for recommended businesses from which to solicit bids, and about the appropriate truck weights.

6. Budget Workshop: A. St Onge has formatted the 2022-2023 BOS Proposed Budget to show proposed \$ changes of any line item as well as the % of change. Chair A. McGarry thanked A. St Onge for the reformatted Proposed Budget, asking for breakout details in several line items. The BOF proceeded with their preliminary look at each budget section, line-by-line, and plan to continue the preliminary review sequentially, as the BOS has presented it. As questions arose, A. St Onge or Guy Lapointe (Interim Finance Director) provided information and will bring other data to the BOF meeting next week. BOF members noted the proposed salary increases, observing that the current rate of inflation is significantly higher. In the fall of 2023, union staff contract negotiation will take place. The First Selectman summarized the concept of a town Administrator; given the town's size, it is prudent to look into this. Subsequently the role (and hours/pay level) of the First Selectman would be greatly reduced.

- Line #18: Board of Selectmen:

Discussion: a stipend increase for the 2 Selectmen at their mid-term point does not seem appropriate.

Motion A. McGarry seconded by D. Johnson to bring the proposed Selectmen's stipend back to the current Fiscal Year amount of \$4,000 carried unanimously.

R. Werge- yes D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

- Line #153: Board of Assessment Appeals:

Discussion: stipends for each elected BoAA official are statutory.

Motion A. McGarry seconded by S. Herbert to leave the budget amount flat, compared to the current fiscal year, for the first 4 line items in the BoAA budget, carried 5-1.

R. Werge- yes D. Johnson- no L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

Discussion: the secretary to the Board is on line #155 and is not an elected Board member.

Motion A. McGarry seconded by S. Herbert to reinstate the budget proposal for line #155, secretary of the BoAA, to the amount proposed by the BOS, carried unanimously, 6-0

R. Werge- yes D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

- Line #165: Elections & Registrations:

Discussion: the results of the Town Meeting to determine the number of voting districts, which is coming right up, could impact the budget proposal. BOF consensus: return to this Department (Line #165) after the results of the town meeting are known.

-Line #188, Town Clerk:

Questions by BOF members were addressed by Renee Waldron, and she will email additional clarifying details to the BOF regarding Vital Records and Record Retention/Restoration.

-Line #220, Town Hall Building:

Discussion: the balance between custodial staffing and contractual custodial services are in transition and should be reviewed again near the end of budget-building process.



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Motion A. McGarry seconded by D. Johnson to reduce the proposed town hall cleaning service (line #227) back to the current fiscal year amount of \$4,000 carried unanimously.

R. Werge- yes D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

- Line #252, Fire Marshal:

Jamie Seney, referencing a PowerPoint presentation he prepared, addressed BOF questions about some line items in the proposed budget, outlining the responsibilities and time required for each. BOF members wondered if it is time to increase inspection fees, particularly for multi-family structures.

BOF preliminary review of the proposed 2022-2023 budget ended with Line #268, Total- Fire Marshal.

7. Board member comments:

. * S. Herbert- Department heads are encouraged to be present at the Budget Workshops, in person or via Zoom, to address questions that arise

. * R. Werge - Looking for “the big picture” document, demonstrating the overall proposed increase

Chair A. McGarry noted that the budget discussion at the March 17 BOF meeting will first return to Line #165-*Elections*, to obtain BOF- requested information following the Town Meeting, then resume at Line # 270 *Fire Departments*.

The Budget Workshops will follow the customary department sequence, as presented in the BOS proposed 2022-2023 Budget.

8. Adjourn:

Motion L. Guillot seconded by S. Herbert to adjourn carried unanimously.

Chair A. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 9:12 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/mxE9bvCqQxOHcfU-](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/mxE9bvCqQxOHcfU-sO28sgt36_WJ2XigQozClfEdhLjUHBdpAWqMnwf2DTGnPrdZ.nDsCYbxBrG-CYBv5)

[sO28sgt36_WJ2XigQozClfEdhLjUHBdpAWqMnwf2DTGnPrdZ.nDsCYbxBrG-CYBv5](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/mxE9bvCqQxOHcfU-sO28sgt36_WJ2XigQozClfEdhLjUHBdpAWqMnwf2DTGnPrdZ.nDsCYbxBrG-CYBv5) Passcode: \$+wx5hYP

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.