



**TOWN of THOMPSON**  
**Board of Finance - Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 17, 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 5 BOF members present

Roll call: Aaron McGarry, Steve Herbert, Rob Mann, Laurent Guillot, Robert Werge. Absent: Dave Johnson.

First Selectman Amy St Onge, Michelle Giammarinaro (HR Director), Guy Lapointe (Interim Finance Director), Jamie Seney (Fire Marshal), John Sharpe (Community Fire Chief), Board/Commission/Fire Department members. Members of the public. Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

2. Approval of Minutes:

**Motion L. Guillot seconded by S. Herbert to approve the 03-10-2022 Regular Meeting/Budget Workshop minutes carried unanimously, noting in the last line of #4 ...are all ~~is~~ in their ...**

3. Correspondence:

- Town clerk 03-11 email clarification of budget line items
- Tax Collector memo 03-14 supporting a Town Administrator position

After the agenda was posted:

- First Selectman A. St Onge memo 03-17 supporting a Town Administrator position
- Selectman S. Witkowski 03-17 memo supporting a Town Administrator position
- S. Herbert 03-17 comments about the possibility of a Town Administrator

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

Commenting about the concept of adding a Town Administrator:

William Warner, Lowell Davis Rd; John Rice, 39 E Thompson Rd; Tom Angelo, 64 Fabyan Rd; Sally White, 308 E Thompson Rd.

- Chief J. Sharpe added to last-week's comments about Community Fire and clarified some data
- A. St Onge: a new Finance Director (combined Schools and Town Government) has been selected and hired. Bill Steglitz begins April 4, 2022. He was present via Zoom and was introduced to the BOF.
- The referendum to combine voting districts failed; the ELECTIONS proposal stands (Line # 165)

5.. Budget Workshop:

- Fire Services, Line # 270: the BOS proposal was reviewed, and several points clarified.
- Chief J. Sharpe: acquiring the R1 designation was a lengthy process, but the Department has confirmation in writing certification by the end of this month. The chronology of Community in the relinquishment of the license/PSA, which was forced when 13 Ambulance personnel resigned in one day, was reviewed; it was not Department initiated. Until then, 24/7/365 coverage had been provided.
- Fire Marshal J. Seney reviewed data regarding response numbers for each Thompson Department
- L. Guillot: to ensure accuracy, data needs to go back further. J. Seney: it is available from 2019 onward.
- R. Werge has reviewed Fire Departments detailed call-out data and used it to ask questions
- A. St Onge noted that the budget proposal is inaccurate (Ambulance Services line # 275); the correct amount is \$259,000 (shortfall of \$9,000), changing the entire Department total (Line # 275) from \$615,000 to \$624,000.
- R. Werge: the Thompson Hill Department, housing K-B Ambulance for several months, with more ahead, absorbs all of the additional utility and other costs; the BOF may want to provide compensation.
- A. McGarry posed various options to funding the Fire Departments, given that Community will soon have R1 certification, keeping all departments funded equally. BOF discussion took place.

**Motion R. Mann seconded by S. Herbert to equally fund the five Fire Departments at \$71,250.**

Discussion: the math shows the amount should be \$71,200 for each of the 5 Departments, acknowledging that the BOF also needs to accommodate the correct funding for the Putnam Ambulance/EMS contract (+\$9,000). Motion and second were rescinded (R. Mann/S. Herbert).

**Motion R. Mann seconded by S. Herbert to equally fund the five Fire Departments at \$71,200 carried unanimously. 5-0. R. Werge- yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes**

**Motion R. Werge seconded by S. Herbert to add \$9,000 to Ambulance Service carried unanimously, 5-0. R. Werge- yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes**

-A. St Onge clarified several Fire Departments lines. Fire Fighters Tax Relief are now tax exemptions

**Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Werge to reduce Line # 281, Paramedic Ambulance based on budgeting history carried unanimously, 5-0. R. Werge- yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes**

- Line # 301, School Security: an unexplained "0" shows in one column; line deferred to next meeting.

- Chair A. McGarry: Schools Finance Director Bob Gentes will retire the end of this month; he proposed that the Budget Workshop be re-sequenced, with the Education Budget review to begin on March 24, continued to March 31 if required. The auditor's report will lead off the agenda on March 24.

#### 6. Board member comments:

- R. Mann urges caution in budget planning, as some projects funded by grants, including ARPA funds, will require consistent long-term maintenance in order to prevent facility disintegration.

-R. Werge noted the hiring of the new Finance Director will be a positive for the town, and that the HR Director, selected and hired only a few months ago, is already an asset.

- A. McGarry will be on the road on March 24 but will participate in the meeting by telephone; Vice Chair R. Werge will run the meeting. On April 7, A. McGarry will not be able to participate in the BOF meeting nor will R. Werge. The BOF will confirm that all BOF members are available to move the meeting to Wednesday, April 6 and availability of town hall space, then modify the schedule.

7. Adjourn: **Motion L. Guillot seconded by R. Mann to adjourn at 9:13 PM carried unanimously.**

To access the video/audio of the meeting, click or copy/paste you're your Search bar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yFLEMB\\_DGOQVKwnK\\_RBpdn0qYC\\_FUXhOPy4ikk7jAmShssfBMh2ScXuo8LyE-K\\_uBe3juo33ifpogF9](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yFLEMB_DGOQVKwnK_RBpdn0qYC_FUXhOPy4ikk7jAmShssfBMh2ScXuo8LyE-K_uBe3juo33ifpogF9) Passcode: AP=z3c4C

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.*