



THOMPSON Board of Finance
Regular Meeting - Minutes
Thursday, May 19, 2022
Town Hall-Merrill Seney Room
and via Zoom from remote locations

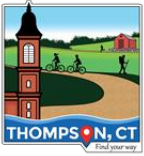
1. The call to order by Chair Aaron McGarry was at 7:00 PM
Roll Call: All 6 BOF members were present. Via Zoom: Robert Werge.
In person at the Town Hall: Aaron McGarry, Steve Herbert, Rob Mann, Dave Johnson, Laurent Guillot.
First Selectman Amy St Onge, Bill Steglitz (Finance Director), Melinda Smith (Superintendent of Schools), Bill Birch (Schools Buildings/Grounds Supervisor) Many members of Boards/Commissions and of the public. Dotti Durst (Recording Secretary)
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2. Approval of minutes:
 - a. **Motion S. Herbert seconded by D. Johnson to approve the April 19, 2022 BOF Regular Meeting minutes carried unanimously (R. Werge "Yes" via Conference Call)**
 - b. **Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Mann to approve the May 16, 2022 BOF Special Meeting minutes carried unanimously (R. Werge "Yes" via Conference Call).**
3. Correspondence:
 - Tax Collector Rene Morin -- 10 months update 2021-2022, as of April 30
 - * After the Agenda was posted:
 - Superintendent of Schools: 05-16-2022 Boiler Replacement document
 - and 05-19-2022 BOE action request memo
4. Citizens' comments: none
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5. Selectman's Update-First Selectman Amy St Onge: Thanking the BOF for their diligent work during the Budget season, she noted that the Property Tax Sale will be next week. Some owners have been able to come in and pay the overdue amounts, but not all. * A structure fire in April has displaced several residents; the building was condemned. The town is required to provide temporary housing; this will at first come from the Building Official's budget line item (\$9,500) as will the costs of boarding up the structure for safety purposes. The owner wants to sell; some costs may be recouped if there is a lien on the parcel. * The RT 12 Sidewalk project \$2M grant came through, with only one viable bid received, which was under the estimated costs. * No applications have come in for the DPW Director position; current staff leaders are handling matters. *The Putnam EMS temporary contract has been in place for a month. 70 incidents have occurred in Thompson and 18 in Putnam to which Thompson EMS responded, as Putnam staff were already out on a call. Mutual aid was also used. Hiring is still a challenge. * A digital Budget Book is being created; the process could only begin once the budget was approved. Ideally, it will be ready by July. A few paper copies will be available.
BOF Questions for the First Selectman: R. Werge asked the status of the Town's ambulances. One has been sold, for \$100K (more than anticipated) which will be received over a 5-year period.
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6. School District Update-Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith: Thanked the BOF/BOS/BOE for a smooth budget process and the passage of the budget on the first vote. *There are 920 students, down 7. Out-placed: 29 (budgeted 25). *Covid has spiked * Capital equipment bad news: the playground had to be shut down after an inspection. Traveler's Insurance states that the total project will cost about \$107K (Repairs for safety, resurfacing, other needs). * The HVAC assessment is complete and going to the Building Committee. * The grant-funded Vision-To-Learn Program is completed, removing barriers to learning for a surprisingly large number of students. * The town's 11th Village will become a used bookstore in October. * June brings end-of-the year fun activities and on June 10, graduation!

Questions for the Superintendent: D. Johnson asked which school had the playground closed? Mary R. Fisher Elementary School. Details were requested about the Vision program and answered. Details about the closure of the playground were provided.

7. Finance Department Report: B. Steglitz- Income: Property tax income is up; 100.1% of the prior year, ahead of schedule. * State and Federal Grants: the final Education Equalization payment arrived, along with 2 smaller grants bringing Thompson right up to budget. *Local revenue: we are at 97% of budget, with increases in conveyance taxes. * Expenses: \$14.6M includes payoff on refinancing, so actual is \$7.4M @ 90% of budget, or \$789K below budget for the full year. Town Council fees: PZC legal fees caused a \$34K increase, with a few other matters. Cash on hand: Up \$2.4M in this month and \$1.3M over last year at this time.
8. Tourtellotte Fund update – Board of Trustees: R. Werge noted that the Board will explore options for financial advisors and available options to expand the base of funds. B. Birch added that physical improvements to the building are planned to gain ADA access compliance.
9. New Business:
 - a. Thompson Public Schools – Boiler Replacement: M. Smith and B. Birch reviewed the recent leaking of the 2007 roof-mounted boiler system, including contacts with the manufacturer who stated the system is not supported and parts are not available. Other suppliers were contacted. If the replacement process begins immediately, it will most likely be installed/operational in September, as the need for heat occurs. Given the weight of the unit and the building's engineered capability of supporting the weight on a specific area of the roof, the logistics of the installation will require extra planning. The BOF asked several questions, including regarding other possible sources of funding. R. Mann posed the question whether this transfer of funds from the BOE fy 2021 budget back to them for this use would cause an impact on the current-year's MBR. The opinion of the Finance Director, B. Steglitz as well as the BOF members, was that these funds were already calculated into the MBR and should have no further impact. B. Birch: yes, this is rather like a carry-over Purchase Order from the previous fiscal year.
Motion S. Herbert seconded by D. Johnson to authorize transferring \$173,129.08 from the Schools Non-Lapsing account to the BOE budget, in order to replace two school boilers. Discussion: given the complexities of the installation process, the BOE requests the full available amount recently moved into the Schools Non-lapsing account, \$189K, for the Boiler replacement project; any unexpended funds for this project will be transferred back. S. Herbert adjusted his Motion and D. Johnson adjusted his Second:
Motion S. Herbert seconded by D. Johnson to authorize transferring \$189K from the Schools Non- Lapsing account to the BOE budget, to replace two school boilers, carried unanimously, 6-0.
R. Werge- "Yes" via Conference Call D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes
R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes

b. Federal and State Grants Discussion: R. Mann asked for clarification. The Town Planner is authorized to seek grant funds. The BOS is authorized to accept them. The BOF has no role in the process. The point to be clarified: in past years, the BOF was kept current about the financial impacts of each grant through creation of a Worksheet. It itemized those which require matching funds, in-kind contributions, and other impacts to future budgets. A. McGarry: the BOF has no jurisdiction regarding grants but does have subsequent responsibility for ramifications and future budgetary impacts. The BOF is calling upon the town to create a document for use in planning for the impacts of each grant, including the ARPA funds.

c. Future Meetings Format discussion: The Hybrid meeting format (in-person as well as via Zoom) permits many members of the public to participate in BOF meetings; several BOF members have needed to utilize the remote option as well. A. McGarry: although the technology may not be ideal in all ways, the BOF have witnessed over these past several months that many people have participated in the budget process, promoting Democracy itself. The consensus of the BOF was to continue with the hybrid meeting format, given that the State has now authorized continuing with the virtual meetings.



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After discussion of the workflow of the BOF, consideration of not meeting during one of the summer months took place. The Financial monthly update is still to be provided to the BOF.

Motion D. Johnson seconded by R. Mann to not meet as scheduled on August 18, 2022, unless a matter arises that requires the BOF's attention, carried unanimously, 6-0.

**R. Werge- "Yes" via Conference Call D. Johnson-yes L. Guillot- yes S. Herbert- yes
R. Mann- yes A. McGarry-yes**

10. Board of Finance Member Comments: none

11. Adjourn:

Motion D. Johnson seconded by S. Herbert to adjourn carried unanimously.

Chair A. McGarry adjourned at 8:27 PM.

The ZOOM recording of the meeting, audio and video, in its entirety:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/5ZM7LeVM89PfDmxQIG_7vKGBNhCmuJS7kfMPRNV_zcYGruFf-clSHDiQ-0YKJ6_1.dqOSwpdAIG9QvvAf Access Passcode: 3MF!H5nP

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

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