



**THOMPSON Board of Finance
Regular Meeting - Minutes
Thursday, September 15, 2022
Town Hall-Merrill Seney Room
and via Zoom from remote locations**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Aaron McGarry at 7:05 PM. with five members present: Aaron McGarry, Robert Werge, Steve Herbert, Rob Mann, Dave Johnson (Laurent Guillot was absent). First Selectman Amy St Onge, Ken Beausoleil (Selectman), Bill Steglitz (Finance Director), Melinda Smith (Superintendent of Schools), Many members of Fire Departments, Boards and Commissions and the public. Dotti Durst (Recording Secretary)
2. Approval of minutes: **Motion D. Johnson seconded by S. Herbert to approve the July 21, 2022 BOF Regular Meeting minutes carried unanimously.**
3. Correspondence:
 - a. Tax Collector's report 09-07-2022.
 - b. Schools negotiations letter 08-03-2022/sent by Superintendent of Schools 08-08
 - c. Tax Collector's report, 08-10-2022
 - d. Price quotes (3): Transfer Station roll-off units, via First Selectman 09-08-2022
 - e. Chief Grauer memos detailing expenses related to EMS
4. Citizens' comments: none
5. Selectman's Update-First Selectman Amy St Onge: *Reviewed the status of sidewalk upgrades (3 more weeks to completion), Main Street reconstruction and road work, and an autumn project of crack and chip sealing of roads which were re-done 3 years ago, with an eye to long-term care. * The 3 bids for engineering and design work for the Public Safety complex will go to the Building Committee for their close review; the expectation is to utilize ARPA funds for this work. * The Putnam EMS (still so-named) August report shows 75 calls, with response time to actual service consistently under 14 minutes. Reciprocal Mutual Aid between Putnam and Thompson was exclusively used when the other Department was already out on another call. Although the EMS Service is fully staffed, additional personnel will be sought for peak time periods. * School Resource (Security) Officer questions have come into the Town Hall, discussing the advisability of arming those staff members. Several aspects of great significance will need to be investigated and planned for before a decision can be made. The idea of a Resident Trooper will be explored again, as some of the SRO issues would thus be resolved. It was noted-Putnam and Killingly do have armed SROs.
Board questions for the First Selectman: D. Johnson reviewed the public process when Putnam made the SRO decision. S. Herbert asked the status of the DPW. Two more staff (Maintainers) are needed; the BOS has interviewed a current staff member for consideration to advance to Director. R. Werge noted that a well-informed person in the region has commented that the EMS call data looks "extraordinarily positive" and added that having two crews is very helpful to meeting both towns' needs. R. Werge asked about the exact work that the Public Safety structure bids will cover. All engineering including environmental, covering the several aspects of the project was the in bid specifications. R. Werge noted that if school security is being reviewed, consideration of an armed State Trooper at the school, rather than at another site, could be considered. Additionally: partnering with the Putnam Police force rather than the State could be considered.
6. School District Update- Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith: the FY 2023 school year opened on a positive note; she thanked school staff for their efforts and noted that BOF member D. Johnson was present for the recent schools tour. * Enrollment will not be finalized for a few more weeks; the current count is 899. Special Education: 27 Out-of-District placements, with 15 students remaining on-site as part of the Bradley Special Education program. * With the completion of the Portrait of a Graduate initiative, graduation requirements now include a capstone project and 10 hours of community service in each of 4 high school years.* School Pride Day was student-driven and resulted in many student-created projects for this year. * Thanks were extended to the BOF and to

Finance Director Bill Steglitz for support. The End-of-Year schools report was handled patiently, and a good job was done. * Final purchase orders are being closed. Special Education will be over-budget. Roof projects are done, and payments are being handled. The Locker Room upgrades are excellent. Grants-funding for creation of the Culinary Arts program is moving forward. Boilers and the debris have been removed; on Columbus Day, a no-school day, the new ones will be lifted to the roof. Thanks were extended to the Building Committee for the many projects handled recently including involving Safety and Security issues. * New staff members have been welcomed, with a couple of openings remaining; ARPA funds have been expended. The FY 2023 budget has now been frozen, given concerns about Special Education costs and that of fuel.

Board questions for the Superintendent: R. Werge asked about the survey of exterior doors, seeking only a general answer, to which M. Smith replied. R. Werge asked about the combined Schools/Town positions (IT, Finance, HR), receiving a positive response. A. McGarry asked the appropriate procedure to be followed by a BOF member between BOF meetings should a question arise about the schools. M. Smith suggests the inquiry come first to her or to BOE Chair, Kathleen Herbert, and the question can then be referred.

7. Financial Report- Finance Director William Steglitz: The 2021-2022 fiscal year ended with revenue ahead of budget (\$434K) and expenses over budget (\$107K) with bond reissues handled elsewhere. The final invoices are being received and handled; encumbrances are being closed. Property taxes collected (\$18.7M) were 101.7% of budget. Audit prep is underway, targeting November. Current Fiscal Year tax collections are ahead of last year's pace (\$10.6M), with previous fiscal years' taxes coming in (\$83K). Expenses include full payment of the allocations/grants to the fire departments.
Board questions for the Finance Director: R. Werge asked about 2022 expenses. With higher EMS unbudgeted costs, the end of year was still positive. Additional expenses were incurred for Town Council, over budget by 219% at \$23K.

8. Tourtellotte Fund update: Board of Trustees: Bill Steglitz- the local financial services firm Weiss/Hale/Zahansky has been selected to handle the Trust's investments.
9. New Business: Thompson Fire Engine Company requests reimbursement of EMS-related expenses as recommended by the BOS at their meeting of 08-02-2022. After discussion, the BOF asked that the requests be resubmitted, with greater detail. No action was taken.
10. Old Business: Selectman's proposal to re-allocate funds for the purchase of DPW roll-off containers: after discussion and noting the document which has been provided with several quotes for potential DPW equipment, as requested at the March BOF meeting, A. St Onge was asked to prepare a specific, definitive request for the October BOF meeting. No action was taken.
11. Board of Finance Member Comments: discussion of past procedural practices took place
12. Adjourn: **Motion S. Herbert seconded by R. Mann to adjourn at 8:24 PM carried unanimously.**

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

The ZOOM recording:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/E3Ce9dT3z30m98sDIzpsbVKfBD_YKYmaoxr4xNXBzFhaw5WVP0hBHWklrgB48iYt.kqaVjIKTgV1BsJL Passcode: TdWd+U1p

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.