



**THOMPSON Board of Finance
Special Meeting -Minutes
Wednesday, December 21, 2022
Town Hall-Merrill Seney Room
and via Zoom from remote locations**

1. The call to order by Vice Chair was at 5:01 PM with all Board members present.
Roll call: Rob Werge, Rob Mann, Dave Johnson, Laurent Guillot. Via Zoom: Aaron McGarry and Steve Herbert. Finance Director William Steglitz, First Selectman Amy St Onge, Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith, Schools Facility Director Bill Birch
2. Citizens' Comments:
 - Bill Warner, Lowell Davis Dr, noted lack of details regarding the HVAC and School Security proposals.
 - Note was made that the sequence of Agenda items is not consistent with the legal notice sequence and the agenda sequence will thus be modified.
3. Discussion and possible action:
 - a. School HVAC project of \$13,200,000. (Potential Office of School Construction Grants and Review grant with 68.2% reimbursement; application completed).
 - Extended discussion took place, linking the three proposals which make up the Agenda
 - Finance Director Bill Steglitz and Schools Facility Director Manager Bill Birch provided details when First Selectman Amy St Onge uploaded a document detailing the financial aspects of the projects for all in attendance to view.
 - It was noted: if the Schools application for the HVAC grant is not approved, the project will halt.
 - Many aspects and details were reviewed by BOF members, including the repayment of bonds and timelines and grant reimbursement timelines. The town fronts the financing followed by eventual reimbursement. There is an impact to the town budget in each subsequent year.
 - BOF members agreed that townspeople will make these three decisions, each separately; the BOF role is to approve sending the questions to them for discussion and their decisions.
 - It was noted that most often, more detailed information was available for decision-making, and that this process feels rushed.
 - General information was provided about what the School security measures would be, if approved (the details are to remain within the BOE Executive Session discussion/decisions)
 - It was confirmed that whether or not a security upgrade grant is secured, the project, if approved by the townspeople, will move forward. A grant application can be submitted after voter approval of the project. It was noted that school (or other security measures) never bring the risk to zero but can be closer. Protecting staff and students is not an option.
 - Review of the Track replacement project by BOF members revealed favorable attitudes toward the project but hesitation about the costs. It was noted that with a possible \$13.7 million being committed to the other two projects, and the long-term impacts to taxes, there was hesitation regarding moving this project forward at this time.
 - Note was made that town pride will grow when the Track is upgraded, as Thompson has not had a usable facility in many years; both students and the public will be able to exercise and enjoy being outside. Superintendent M. Smith noted the possible negative impact on school accreditation.
 - BOF members expressed a desire to prioritize expenditures but acknowledged the possible negative impact of the track on Schools Accreditation, which is pending.
 - The current fiscal situation was reviewed noting anticipated increased costs due to inflation and possible recession, and several budget categories were named that could be impacted.
 - Although not all BOF members were in favor of all three Resolution items, the BOF members agreed that these are questions for townspeople's decisions.

Motion L. Guillot seconded by S. Herbert to forward to Town Meeting (January 18) and Referendum (January 31) the full Special Town Meeting legal notice for consideration by the voters: Resolution #1, as presented to the Board of Finance, which calls for \$13,200,000 to be used for HVAC Schools Systems project carried, 5-1 Laurent Guillot- yes
 Dave Johnson- yes Rob Mann – no Steve Herbert- yes Rob Werge- yes Aaron McGarry-yes

b. School Security project of \$500,000. (Potential Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security grant with 68.2% reimbursement; expected to be released in early 2023.)

Motion A. McGarry seconded by D. Johnson to forward to Town Meeting (January 18) and Referendum (January 31) the full Special Town Meeting legal notice for consideration by the voters: Resolution #2, as presented to the Board of Finance, which calls for \$500,000 to be used for Schools Security Systems upgrades carried unanimously, 6-0.

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

c. School Track project of \$1,500,000. (No known grants at this time)

Motion A. McGarry seconded by D. Johnson to forward to Town Meeting (January 18) and Referendum (January 31) the full Special Town Meeting legal notice for consideration by the voters: Resolution #3, as presented to the Board of Finance, which calls for \$1,500,000 to be used for Schools Outdoor Track replacement carried, 4-2.

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

4. Board of Finance Member Comments:

-R. Mann: Thanks for the excellent previously-used replacement conference table, which functions very well. He appreciates the healthy exchange of ideas and opinions among the BOF and town staff
 -A. St Onge praised the BOF members for their diligence and thanked them

5. Adjourn:

Motion R. Mann seconded by D. Johnson to adjourn carried unanimously.
 The meeting adjourned at 6:31 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/Ynqlk2Miy4ukadr_q0MUihazna0_m7wBeWVuGK6TFxgRqpi0QSgzhjvm-s5qT4Bi.eQ6kUJ2pkuFRga5y Passcode: 95VhJM&!

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.