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THOMPSON
BOARD OF FINANCE

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Jinda Paradise
TOWN CLERK, Assi

Minutes – Special Meeting
Budget Workshop
Thursday, April 12, 2018, 7:00 PM
Thompson Library/Community Center Rooms 1&2

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Chairman Aaron McGarry called the meeting to order at 7:20PM, explained that the meeting was moved from the Meeting Room to Rooms 1&2 because of concern the Meeting Room could potentially exceed maximum capacity.

I. Roll call

- Members Present: Aaron McGarry, Larry Groh Jr., Jim Bellavance, Rhonda Rooney, Susanne Witkowski and Rob Mann.
- Members Absent: None
- Staff Present: Orla McKiernan-Raftery, Diane Minarik, Recording Secretary
- Also Present: Members of the Public

II. Correspondence:

- A. Budget Update from 4/5/18 BOF Meeting (4/6/18 email from Orla)

II. Citizen's Comments:

Chair McGarry asked the citizens to please keep their comments brief so everyone has the chance to speak.

- Melinda Smith, 715 Reservoir Rd Burrillville RI, Superintendent of Schools, handed out a Thompson Public Schools (TPS) Strategic Plan brochure to the Board reminding them that the Community has built a Strategic Plan and the BOE Budget is built on that Strategic Plan, she did a complete assessment of TPS when she came on board and found TPS does not have the support services in place that other school districts have, she is trying to add these much needed support services the most economically way possible by swapping and shifting positions, all the students, parents and teachers in the room are the faces behind the numbers of their budget.
- Christopher McCleur, 25 Green Acres Ln, being part of the TMHS Music Dept. gives him the opportunity to reach out to the community and touch many life's like playing Taps in the Memorial Day Parade.
- R. Hazzard, 52 Bonnette Ave, part of TMHS Modern Music Ensemble and Drama Club which have taught her a lot and helped her gained confidence, concerned if large budget cuts are made the Sports and Arts Departments could no longer exist, these programs teach vital life skills in a different way and are important to the schools.
- Christine Desrochers, retired Teacher, 2 grandchildren in TPS, as a tax payer doesn't want to lose good programs and have to start over again, children are the most important thing we have, return the \$300K to the school.
- Cole Coderre, Chase Rd, freshman at TMHS, member of Concert Band and Drama Club, learning valuable life skills which are essential to adult life, tragedy to lose them.

- John Embair, 37 Buckley Hill Rd, freshman at TMHS, member of Music Dept. which has helped him make friends and the teacher is a true inspiration to all of them.
- Justina Gil, 111 Labby Rd, senior at TMHS and founding member of the Budget Committee formed because many students were concerned with the impact the budget cuts would have on the school, like decrease in enrollment, and the sports and music programs which brings more people to town which ultimately lowers taxes, the sports has allowed her to discover who she is and make live long friends, without proper funding these programs are at risk of being cut which would be a detrimental loss to the student population, please consider the students and don't make any more cuts.
- Magen Baker, Canterbury, TMHS Principal, very proud of Thompson students and the schools for creating these young men and women into incredible potential leaders.
- Madison Hopkins, 129 Church St, over half of the student are involved in music or sports, without these programs no one would want to attend Thompson Schools, teachers will lose their jobs and many lives will be disruptive.
- Keegan Watt, 779 E. Thompson Rd, was in the music program all 4 yrs of HS which had such a huge impact on her life that she is now pursuing a career in music, when they performed for the community they were asked to come back over and over again.
- Matt P, Sunset Hill Rd, we all pay Federal, State and Local taxes but get the most out of the local level, everyone receives benefit from public schools, even though we use our voice at the local level it doesn't mean the taxes can't go up.
- Stephanie Plasse, 49 Rachel Dr, daughter in music program for 4 yrs, music is a big part of everybody's lives we connecting memories with music, without a music program who would inspire our children to use their voices to effect someone's life.
- Paul Boisvert, Quaddick Town Farm Rd, has returned from Marianapolis half a semester ago and for him to speak out after only half a semester what does that say about the program.
- Karen Coderre, Chase Rd, give the kids a reason to stay at TPS, her son has exceled here, to cut the budget.
- Rebecca Torres, Long Pond Rd, member of the Music and Athletics departments and Choir President, when she turns 18 this summer she is going to vote, TMHS has taught her a lot she is going into the Airforce and be a nurse.
- Bill Witkowski, 12 Clarence Dr, BOE Chairman, so proud of the student support, submitted an honest good budget that fits the needs of the school right now, privatized the busing and the BOE Budget took on that capital expense which is the biggest part of their increase, however the Town side has real needs also like fixing the roads, infrastructure, highway trucks, fire depts., it's not all about the school, need to act like a Town and harness this energy to pass these budgets.
- Shawn Brissette, Fairway Dr, member of BOE, when economy was in the tank he understood towing the line and the town is now showing those effects, the economy has turned and it's time we build a budget that fits the needs of our town, what kind of town do we want live in?
- Noveline Beltram, Pascoag, RI, MRFES Principal and Music Teacher for many years, she has never seen so much energy by a Superintendent who has come to our district, she level funded her budget because it was her fiscal responsibility to do as a Principal, she hasn't seen anything like the energy, foresight and vision in the brochure in 30 years and what excitement to be able to go to a warehouse and see the science kits that will be brought back the TPS, they have followed other

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schools and existed on air for many years but neither the Town nor schools can do it all the time, this is the year they could make such a difference, already have kids eating breakfast and weekend programs for food to help out the community, we can do it together Town and School.

- John Rice, E. Thompson Rd, he is a recipient of the Music Dept. programs out in the community, the last few years students have played Taps and sang National Anthem for the Vets at the E. Thompson Cemetery Memorial Day Program and what a response they get, he would hate to see to go.
- Jaylyn Watt, E. Thompson, mother of TMHS Senior who has really blossomed from the Music and Drama Programs, she read where the State Prisons has spent a lot of money on an Arts Program for the inmates, why aren't our children that important, why not invest in our children now instead of perhaps when they go to prison, now is more important.
- Ken Beausoleil, Walker Dr, 1st Selectmen, It was a pleasure doing the budget this year, only putting in what is very important, working together with the new Superintendent and her vision to accomplish the same goals, economic development is starting but the infrastructure and education have to be in place to make it work, need to get out and vote for both budgets.

Chair McGarry thanked everyone for their comments and explained the process of their meeting and asked the public to please limit the conversations among themselves so the Board can hear each other.

III. Budget Workshop: starting Mil Rate increase 1.2124 (down from 1.22 after checking formulas), current budget is \$25,888,708M & Mill Rate is 28.22.

- Financial Director O. McKiernan-Rafferty updated the Board on:
 - ✓ Assessor Professional Affiliations page 24 – the Assessor requested the \$15 be put back into the line item – added \$15.
 - ✓ Tax Collector wages page 21 – the formula didn't calculate properly for all 3 line items – added \$1,196K to Collector and removed \$1,483K total from clerks.
 - ✓ Diesel Fuel page 48 – fuel pricing went up for the Town, heating oil and diesel fuel up 50% and unleaded 30%, suggestion to only increase diesel fuel line item – added \$7,000K,
 - ✓ Fuel Reimbursement Income page 8 - will increase because of higher fuel prices when other departments buy from us – added \$4,000K.
- Public Works pages 47-48 - DPW Director R. Benoit is repairing the backhoe for under \$10K as estimated at 3/22/18 meeting, his job consists of doing a lot of different things which doesn't allow him to be out supervising the crews all the time, he is asking to take a Highway Maintainer and make him a Crew Leader to help the DPW run more efficiently and therefore saving money, will only cost \$6,551 more for entire year including benefits – removed \$48,919K from Highway Maintainer and added \$54,163K for new Crew Leader position.
 - ✓ Fringe Benefits Pension page 94 – add estimated 10% increase for benefits to this line item for the new Crew Leader position – added \$1,310K.
 - ✓ Contractor for MS4 page 48 – won't need all the money in FY19 depends on where they are in the project, will need money in FY20, suggestion to take \$7,500 out of line item to help fund dam inspection and new Crew Leader position - reduced from \$18K to \$10,500K.
 - ✓ Dump Truck (9-ton) (PW6) page 109 – new pricing is \$43,500 for 5yr lease-to-own payments, or dump truck **and** paver box for \$55,192K **8 yr.** lease-to-own

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payments, the additional interest cost for 8 yrs-vs-5yrs is approx. \$1K, Board decided on 8 yr. lease-to-own dump truck and paver box – reduced from \$58,828 to \$28,699 for 8yrs and add \$26,492 for new paver box.

- Community Center Repairs (L1) page 109 – current avail \$94,500K, after the Cooling Tower project is completed in May 2018 the avail balance will be \$45,671, add FY19 adjusted amount of \$35K = \$80,671K, next step in FY18-19 is est. cost \$75K to replace 4 air exchangers (that are the source of most service calls and repair expenses), est. \$18K to replace one boiler (25 yrs old), and est. \$7,500 to replace a failing humidifier – no change to budget.
- School Board Expenditures page 106 – discussion continued from last meeting on the impacts to the school budget if FY19 budget increase is cut by \$240,000K – *they offer a service to the Town* - all 3 schools budgets came in level funded so there is no area where they can cut a hunk of money from, they gave money back from fuel cost adjustments and the big increases are from contracts and privatizing busses, with that size of a cut they would have to go through their budget line item by line item and make cuts that will effect teachers, administrators and students, they have already made staffing shifts to make problematic changes to meet the students' needs, currently the schools doesn't have the infrastructure to support the students well (no reading teachers at Middle School, social workers at upper levels) and this budget is trying to change that, there is a 1time bus drivers severance payment of \$88K in this budget because of privatizing – removed \$40K from BOE budget.

Thanks to the school and town for taking another look at their budgets and bring potential line item savings back to the Board of Finance, its growth and unity not seen before and makes it a lot easier for the BOF to do their job.

- The Board discussed their options to bring the proposed Mil Rate down to 0.75% and other questions, each referendum costs the Town \$5K,
 - ✓ When DATTCO contract is signed, (hopefully in couple weeks) the Town will receive money for 5 years from the sale of the buses, and DATTCO will pay \$2K/month for rent to park the buses at Town Garage – no action taken.
 - ✓ The Ambulance service is supported by the Board and has not been forgotten – no change to budget.
 - ✓ Salt and Sand page 57 – the Board wanted to lower this line item by \$25K to bring it down to \$175K but as of updated budget from 3/22/18 meeting, it is at \$185K – reduced from \$185K to \$175K.
 - ✓ Canine Control Operation page 44 – contract with NECCOG, questions and concerns on the service the town will be receiving (not good), BOS hasn't made a decision yet – no change to budget.
 - ✓ Building Official page 59 – current contract through 6/30/18 sharing with Woodstock, we offered \$62K to continue another year, haven't heard back yet, Building Official is a 4 year appointed term – no change to budget.
 - ✓ Town Hall Building Cleaning Services page 36 – never hired Evening Custodian, had to kept same vendor until budget passed, BOS planned on the Building Maintainer doing custodial stuff but didn't happened due to all the maintenance work needed – no change to budget.
 - ✓ First Selectman Exec. Assistant/Personnel page 15 – only position with higher pay increase than 1.85%, disagreement on proposed or voted \$6K raise over two yrs, staff was increased in department, everybody works hard and deserves pay

raises, BOF needs to set a budget that's fair to entire town – no change to budget.

- ✓ Surplus page 10 – FY18 has \$675,000K allocated and as of 3/30/18 only going to need approx. \$500,000K so approx. \$175,000K will roll over into fund balance and available if needed, Board discussed several scenario's, Bond rate can't go below 7.5%, FY18 rate is 8.9%, if use \$175K brings rate down to 8.2% – use \$175,000 from fund balance for FY19 budget.

Larry Groh Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to approve this change in Surplus to the working budget:

Revenue – 3050 Other Sources		Page 10
Project Name	Action Voted	Reason
497550 - Surplus	Appropriate \$175,000K from Fund Balance	To Fund FY19 Budget

Larry Groh Jr. – Yes

Susanne Witkowski – Yes

Rob Mann – No

Rhonda Rooney – Yes

Jim Bellavance – No

Aaron McGarry – Yes

R. Mann feels money should stay in surplus in case ambulance needs more.

J. Bellavance hasn't decided yet, wants to look at the numbers.

The motion carried.

Rob Mann moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to approve these changes to the working budget:

Capital Improvement Program – 5 Year				Page 109
Project Name	Requested/Proposed	Action Voted	New Amount	Reason
PW6 – Dump Truck (9 Ton)	\$58,828	Remove \$30,129	\$28,699	8yr Lease-to-own payment
New – Paver Box	\$0	Add \$26,492	\$26,492	8yr Lease-to-own payment
Revenue – 3040 Local Revenue				Page 8
440349 – Fuel Reimbursement Income	\$65,000	Add \$4,000	\$69,000	Additional Revenue from diesel prices
Expenditures – 1302 Tax Collector Wages				Page 21
5100009 – Tax Collector	\$64,666	Add \$1,196	\$65,862	Error in calculation
510010 – Finance Tax Clerk 35 Hours	\$46,444	Remove \$799	\$45,645	Error in calculation should be \$24.53/hr. plus contracted rate of 1.85%
510011 – Finance Tax Clerk 30 Hours	\$39,809	Remove \$684	\$39,125	
Expenditures – 1303 Assessor				Page 24
522110 – Professional Affiliations	\$85	Add \$15	\$100	Assessor requested the \$15 be put back in

Expenditures – 3202 Public Works				Page 47-48
510031 – Highway Maintainer (7 people)	\$342,433	Remove \$48,919	\$293,514	Removed 1 person for new position (below)
New – Crew Leader	\$ 0	Add \$54,163	\$54,163	New position at \$25.94/hr.
522282 – Contractor for MS4	\$18,000	Remove \$7,500	\$10,500	MS4 doesn't need it all, can help fund new Crew Leader Position
533130 – Diesel Fuel	\$100,000	Add \$7,000	\$107,000	Diesel cost increased
Expenditures – 3206 Snow Removal				Page 57
533060 – Salt and Sand	\$185,000	Remove \$10,000	\$175,000	Lowered to FY18 Budget Amount
Expenditures – 7301 Fringe Benefits				Page 94
511090 - Pension	\$224,200	Add \$1,310	\$225,510	Increase due to new Crew Leader position
Expenditures – 9000 School Board Budget				Page 106
400/4880 – School Board Expenditures	\$18,593,744	Remove \$40,000	\$18,553,744	Until revenue from DATCO Contract then refund if needed
OR FY19 Budget Increase	\$341,978		\$301,978	New FY19 Budget Increase amount

The Mil Rate increase after these changes is 0.7152, original was 1.96

The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Board of Finance Member's Comments: None

V. Adjourn:

Larry Groh Jr. moved and Susanne Witkowski seconded the motion to adjourn.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Aaron McGarry adjourned the meeting at 10:18 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Minarik

Diane Minarik
Recording Secretary