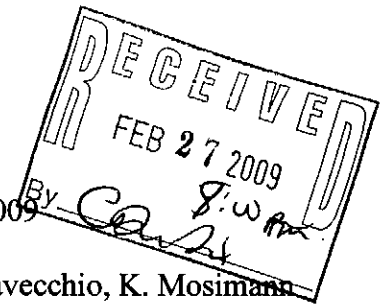


Thomaston Board of Finance
Minutes of Special Meeting February 24, 2009



Present: J. Scheppard, E. Mone, G. Seabourne, M. Galbraith, D. Colavecchio, K. Mosimann O'Sullivan.

Also present: First Selectman Maura Martin and Finance Director S. Costa

Invited Town Department Heads: Fire Marshall Robert Norton; Town Hall Supervisor, Scott Simpson; Opera House Executive Director, Jeff Dunn; Fire Chief James Wilson.

Members of the public, press.

J. Scheppard called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan, it was voted to move the reports from Town Hall Maintenance Supervisor, Scott Simpson to the top of the agenda.
VOTE: Unanimous

Mr. Simpson explained that the proposed budget increase is due to the need for a part-time assistant to clean the building which is in use 7 days a week from morning till late at night. Cleaning supplies, repairs to the HVAC system and building repairs are required. J. Scheppard noted that, in fact, the money used to pay overtime in 2008-2009, will be used to pay an assistant, therefore there is no proposed budget increase.

2. On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by D. Colavecchio it was voted to move the Fire Department forward on the agenda. VOTE: Unanimous

Fire Chief James Wilson reported that the increases in the proposed budget are in the Machinery and Equipment line which was cut in the 2008-2009 budget. Safety gear, repair and maintenance of the fleet of vehicles is vital. The Department will apply to FEMA for 45 sets of turn-out gear; the Department will need to replace a minimum of 5 at the end of the year.

A discussion on the feasibility of receiving insurance reimbursement for house calls and car fires was discussed. It was recommended that the Fire Dept. work with the Ambulance Corps and file claims jointly.

Chief Wilson reported that the Department will seek to replace the Rescue vehicle and Engine 3 by purchasing one combined unit.

He discussed regionalization of departments, noting that Terryville and Thomaston rely more on mutual aid, joint training, and swapping and sharing of equipment.

3. On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan it was voted to move the Fire Marshall forward on the agenda. VOTE: Unanimous

Mr. Norton reported that the proposed budget increases are due to the following: required education and training; mileage, general supplies, and association dues because of changes in the fire code and state reports; updates to the computer system.

4. On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by K. Mosimann O'Sullivan it was voted to move the Opera House forward on the agenda. VOTE: Unanimous

Jeff Dunn, Executive Director, reported that he anticipates that the Opera House will be able to "come close" to reimbursing the loan of \$140,000 by year's end. He distributed a packet listing a number of grants the Town received for improvements to the Opera House. He noted that the Opera House has hired a Development Director who has successfully raised over \$20,000 in Annual Giving, and several thousand dollars in grants.

J. Scheppard stated that the Board of Finance will explore the feasibility of the Opera House becoming an independent entity, apart from the Town Budget. The prior practice of the Town contributing an annual stipend to the Opera House could be reinstated. The goal would be to eliminate the risk of liability to the Town for the Opera House expenses.

5. On a motion by G. Seabourne, seconded by D. Colavecchio, it was voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 20, 2009 to the next Regular Meeting of Board of Finance. VOTE: Unanimous
6. On a motion by E. Mone, seconded by G. Seabourne it was voted to waive Communications. VOTE: Unanimous
7. Financial Director's Report – No Report
8. Selectman's Report – No Report
9. Old Business – None
10. New Business – G. Scheppard reported that he had met with the Teachers Union earlier in the day.
11. Public Comment- A. Durso reported that Plymouth is using a portion of their Undesignated Fund Balance to support the 2009-2010 Budget. He urged the Thomaston to do the same. Finance Director S. Costa reported that the Grand List is down about \$1million. S. Santa Maria urged the Board of Finance to look at service contracts from such vendors as Sonitrol and asked that the Board of Finance request the Board of Education to look at their service contracts and HVAC contract.
The members of the Board of Finance and Selectman Martin thanked Frank Treglia for his initiative and success in securing a donation of a new lawn mower and leaf blower, saving the Town \$10,000.

On a motion by D. Colavecchio, seconded by E. Mone, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

M. Galbraith
Secretary, Thomaston Board of Finance