



THOMPSON Board of Finance
Special Meeting/Budget Presentation
Minutes
Thursday - March 7, 2024
Thompson Public Schools Auditorium

The YouTube link, for watching the meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/@townofthompsonct9058>

1. The call to order was at 7:02 PM by Acting Chair Brian Lynch with 5 BOF Board members present: Chair Rob Werge and Vice Chair Stephen Herbert attended via Zoom.
In person: Dave Johnson, Brian Lynch, Nicola Chrzanowski (at 7:06).
Absent: Laurent Guillot
Recording Secretary: Dotti Durst

2. Budget Presentation:

Both presentations utilized PowerPoint slides which are available to the public.

A. Board of Education Budget Proposal:

* BOE Chair Kathleen Herbert welcomed the participants in the meeting and reviewed statutory responsibilities to provide Education.

*The original 2024-2025 Schools Proposed Budget total amount was \$21,489,863.

*After collaborative meetings, and the BOE's reduction of \$442,202, the proposed budget submitted to the BOF is \$20,604,373, which is an increase of \$885,490 or 4.3% over the current year. * Special Education costs are expected to be stable: there are 188 students with an IEP (Individual Education Plan) and 80 with a 504 plan (Post Grad). The Bradley Program (56 students) is a positive, both for services to the students but also to the budget. Services are provided on-site, with transportation costs thus reduced. It was noted that if the State did cover all Thompson Special Education costs, the amount would be \$4.8M.

Presenters:

BOE Chair Kathleen Herbert

Superintendent of Schools Melinda Smith

BOE Member Justin Yong

Finance Director William Steglitz

Director of Pupil Services Dr. Christopher Jones

*The drivers of increases: Contractual services/linked healthcare, contractual transportation.

* The 5-year Capital Plan includes the accreditation process; mandatory upgrades are expected.

*Acting Chair B. Lynch asked if there were questions from within the room.

B. Board of Selectmen's Budget Proposal: First Selectman Amy St Onge

* A. St Onge thanked the BOF and offered a "shout-out" of thanks to Bryce Pratt and to the entire school/town IT Staff

Thompson BOF Special Meeting/Budget Presentations

i. General Budget:

Reviewed General Town Revenue (\$2,142,000) as well as General Town Expenses, Debt Service, Capital Requests (total:\$10,291,000). The amount to be raised by taxation is \$8,149,000. Several increases the town does not control were detailed including Debt Service, Salaries/benefits, Fire Departments, QV Dispatch, CT Water (hydrants), Vehicle Liability Insurance, NDDH, NECCOG, and others. The proposed increase over the current fy is \$1,536,000. Note that Thompson Hill Fire Department receives a stipend for covering the utilities and other costs of housing the Ambulance Service in their building.

ii. Local Capital Improvement Projects: in particular, town roads needs were detailed.

iii. Capital Improvement Plans: “Capital costs are all increasing but need doesn’t go away.” Specifics include vehicle needs, Riverside Park lighting for public safety and for use of the park. The Repair Fund has been re-titled to enable use for any town structure and also provides a resource to leverage grant applications. Revaluation is approaching; the town is wisely setting aside funds annually to be ready for that major expense. The Little League last year completed one aspect of restoration of Bull Hill playing space and targets another area this year.

* Acting Chair B. Lynch asked if there were questions from within the room.

* Acting Chair B. Lynch thanked all presenters and the audience for their participation. He noted that the BOF will meet in March on the next three consecutive Thursdays to examine the budgets as proposed (Hybrid format, 7 PM at the Town Hall). All are invited to attend.

3. Adjourn:

Motion D. Johnson seconded by N. Chrzanowski to adjourn at 8:03 PM carried unanimously.

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.