

**Approved 03/21/2024**

**Thomaston Budget Committee  
Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2023**

Members Present: Doug Erickson (Chair), Susan Devlin (Secretary), Ron Gamage (Vice Chair), Seth Silverton, Kimberly Matthews, Kara George (Town Manager), Jodell Benson (Finance Director)

Others Attending: Several Select Board and Department representatives

The meeting was called to order by Doug Erickson at 6:00 pm.

Doug noted the purpose of this last meeting was to vote on our recommendations regarding the 3/28/2023 draft budget with the 3/29/2023 adjustments provided by Kara and Jodell.

The meeting was opened to the floor, but there were no questions/comments and then the committee went into closed session.

**Health & Welfare**

The decision last meeting to recommend separating out the increase in Call Attendants-per hour nights was reviewed, with the estimate presented of the total financial impact, including other line items that would be impacted. While there was general support for expanding the EMT services to full time coverage, it was felt that this should be a town decision which the warrant allows.

Acting Chief Leo was asked about moving the EMS Chief to full time at this point if it is possible in the future that we would transition to a combined department (Fire and Ambulance). His comments supported the appropriateness of the recommendation to have a full-time EMS Chief now who is also the EMA Director and has firefighter expertise at this time.

It was further recommended to simplify communication for presentation to the town by including in the expenses presented in the 3/28/2028 Ambulance expense detail and have a single warrant that should all changes in expenses for moving to full night service.

It was moved and seconded to present the budget this way with expenses stated in the 3/29/2023 working copy of this budget. The vote was 5-0.

It then was moved and seconded to recommend a warrant that covered the changes in the budget needed to adjust the Ambulance Wages to full coverage of night hours. The vote was 5-0.

**General Government**

With no further discussion, it was moved and seconded to recommend the General Government Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Buildings**

It was moved and seconded to recommend the Buildings Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

It was further recommended to Select Board to commence a study of the feasibility of moving the Academy Building to be financially self-sufficient in the future. The vote was 5-0.

**Public Safety (Fire Department)**

It was moved and seconded to recommend the Public Safety Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Public Works**

It was moved and seconded to recommend the Public Works Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Recreation and Leisure**

It was noted that aside from Recreation, the recommended budget had been voted on earlier.

It was moved and seconded to also recommend the Recreation Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Social Services and Local Agencies**

It was noted that this budget had already been voted on at an earlier meeting.

**Unclassified Accounts**

It was noted that this budget had already been voted on at an earlier meeting.

**Capital Outlays**

It was moved and seconded to recommend the Public Safety Budget as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Full Budget**

It was moved and seconded to recommend the Full FY23 Budget of \$4,865,995 as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Closing**

When opened for comments, Diane Giese expressed concern about having the Warrant for Ambulance rather than providing the extra expenses in the budget. It was reiterated that the Budget Committee feels it is the right for the town to make the decision to expand this service.

Pete Lammert thanked the committee for its hard work.

Kara reminded the committee that their recommendations would be presented to the Select Board on Monday April 10<sup>th</sup> (6:00 pm) and encouraged all to attend.

The meeting was adjourned.