Town of Thomaston Proposed 2020-2021 Budget
Select Board & Budget Committee
Approved by the Select Board on June 22, 2020

Budget Committee Recommendations:

Dept.		Motion	Vote	Amount
100	General Government	JR1/CG2	5-0-1 (Susan abstained)	$483,907.13
700	Assessing	JR1/CG2	6-0	$67,427.64
	Assessing & Code	RODG1/SD2	6-0	$6,100.00
200	Buildings	JR1/RODG2	6-0	$125,950.00
300	Police	JR1/SD2	5-1-0 (Rod opposed)	$424,403.60
400	Fire	JR1/SD2	6-0	$166,269.44
420	Protection & Safety	JR1/RODG2	6-0	$224,717.52
500	Public Works	JR1/RODG2	6-0	$554,927.85
600	Ambulance	JR1/SD2	6-0	$331,788.48
650	Sanitation	JR1/SD2	6-0	$255,621.00
750	Financial Assistance	JR1/SD2	6-0	$10,000.00
800	Recreation & Leisure	JR1/SD2	6-0	$111,059.56
850	Social Services	JR1/SD2	6-0	$16,075.00
900	Unclassified Accts	SD1/JR2	6-0	$692,850.04
	Library	SD1/CG2	6-0	$68,000.00
	Cemetery			$19,000.00
900	Total Unclassified Accts	SD1/JR2	6-0	$779,850.04
1000	Capital Projects	JR1/SD2	6-0	$390,276.54
	Total			$3,948,373.80
	Revenues/Offsets	SD1/CG2	6-0	($296,407.00)
	Total Municipal Budget	**RODG1/JR2**	**6-0**	**$3,651,966.41**
	Correction on Page 24 (New Municipal Building Bond)			($153.80)
	Corrected Total Municipal Budget			**$3,651,812.61**
	RSU #13 Assessment			$4,973,125.12
	Knox County Assessment			$396,329.00
	Knox County Communications			$91,880.08
	Total School and County Budgets			**$5,461,334.20**
	Total Increase to the Budget:			**$20,520.19 or 0.23%**

Summary of Changes:

As a guide for reading through the budget for FY2020-2021, all department budgets have been marked in green for an additional budget line and red for a deletion of a budget line. Many lines have been consolidated, added, deleted, or moved around in this year's budget for efficiency and understanding.

100 General Government:

The Town Manager is recommending an increase in both legal budget lines for the General Government and Assessing. Both accounts have been over expended the last several years. The Town will be entering further union negotiations with the Fraternal Order of Police and Teamsters. Additionally, the Town is still working through the crematorium process and the Walmart tax appeal. I am recommending a $7,000 increase for legal fees under General Government and $5,000 under Assessing.

Also recommended is to change the Finance Coordinator position from hourly to salary as this role best aligns with a salaried position. This will also eliminate the overtime budget line that has been increasing each year.

The Computers section includes the addition of the new website, copiers, and email services. However, the expenditures will be offset by the computer reserve funds, as approved by the Select Board this past year. The I.T. administration budget line has been reduced and added to the Assessors' Agent budget line with an additional line for outside I.T. services.

700 Assessor's Office:

The Assessor's salary has been increased due to the reduction of hours from I.T. administration. Additionally, the department has requested a large format printer/scanner to replace the old machine for map printing, etc.

200 Buildings:

Since the Town acquired the former Lura Libby building, all expenses for the building have been expended from the Municipal Facilities Reserve. A new section has been added to the budget to pay for the building costs of the new Municipal Building. This is a cost of $42,700.

300 Police:

The Budget Committee and the Town Manager are recommending the addition of a detective position and the reduction of one patrol officer position. Additionally, the Budget Committee is recommending an increase to the equipment line of $17,915.50 for the following purchases:

(5) Tasers with holsters and cartridge replacements	$11,042.50 (one-time cost)
(3) Body cameras	$2,193.00 (one-time cost)
(3) Cruiser cameras	$4,680.00 (yearly lease)
Total:	$17,915.50

The Police Chief is recommending an additional position. If an additional patrolman is added to the budget, this is how much the cost is:

Wage:	$44,033.66
FICA	$366.42
Insurance	$27,321.84
MSRS	$3,336.97
TOTAL:	**$75,058.89**

Based on this number, it is estimated to increase the mil rate by .25 per 1,000. This equates to approximately $63.00 to the taxpayer on an average home valued at $250,000. At this time, the Budget Committee and Town Manager are not recommending an additional position.

400 Fire:

The SCBA (self-contained breathing) bottles, clothing, and the dry hydrant used to be a separate warrant article. These items have now been added to the Fire Department budget. Other budget lines have been moved, deleted, or combined.

500 Public Works:

Several budget lines were combined and eliminated. A half position has been added to pay for the union position that is split between Public Works and Pollution Control.

600 Ambulance:

In last year's budget, the payroll for per-diem ambulance and night per-diem employees was not added to the budget. The costs were used as an offset from the revenues at the end of the year. It is recommended that the Ambulance per-diems be budgeted for a total of $149,000. The mutual aid has been reduced from $104,000 to $50,000. Lastly, ambulance billing was not previously budgeted for and has been added to the Ambulance budget, a total of $6,000.

800 Recreation & Leisure:

A wage adjustment of 5% is recommended for the Recreation Director position.

900 Unclassified Accts:

There is an increase to FICA of $11,346.40, which is based on the Town being fully staffed with no vacancies and with new pay rates.

There is an increase of $9,946.57 for the health insurance. This is because the Town is now offering family health insurance at a 77/23 split between the employee and Town as was negotiated by the union. The Town Manager is recommending that the Town switches from the POS A plan to the POS C plan, which is the next tier down from what employees currently have. By switching plans, it saves the Town approximately $27,000.

Previously, the Town of Thomaston left the Maine State Retirement System (MSRS) and then rejoined MSRS on January 1, 2010. During the time that the Town was enrolled, MEPERS held the funds paid in by Thomaston in an escrow account. When the Town rejoined MSRS in 2010, the Town drew from the escrow funds that were continuing to be held by MEPERS to pay for the employer's portion of the retirement. In 2015, MEPERS turned the remaining escrow funds over to the Town of approximately $364,596. The Town continued to draw from those funds each year and the retirement costs were not put into the budget. Currently, there is approximately $75,456 remaining in the account. The Town Manager recommends the total costs of MSRS is added to the budget of $83,351.87.

Additionally, the Town Manager recommends that $100,000 is used as an offset towards the employee health insurance and $35,000 from the Employee Retirement escrow account be used as an offset toward the MSRS.

0900-1000 Library:

The Library department was a debated budget amongst the Budget Committee. The original request from the Library was significantly higher than last year at $87,000. The Town Manager made a recommendation of $72,977.00. In the end, the Budget Committee voted to recommend $68,000, which is a $1,280 increase.

1000 Capital Projects:

A new reserve budget line is recommended of $24,000 to be saved for culvert replacements.

Additionally, budget lines were added to pay the first payments on the Streetscape Bond and the Municipal Building Bond. A total of $52,430.34.

2000 Special Assessments:

The RSU #13 school assessment is projected to decrease by ($26,777.00). The Knox County assessment is projected to increase by $13,410.38. This leaves a total reduction of ($13,366.62).

TOTAL BUDGET WITH TOWN, SCHOOL, & KNOX COUNTY:

The Town budget is a total increase of $33,886.81 minus the reduction in RSU #13 and Knox County of ($13,366.62) leaves a total increase of $20,520.19 or a 0.23% increase.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara George

Kara George
Town Manager
Town of Thomaston