

Town of South Thomaston, Maine: Budget Committee minutes #3

Thursday January 24, 2013

Present:

**Selectmen** – Robert Branco and Jeff Northgraves

**Budget committee members** – Chuck Hartman, Gayle Gallant, Moira Paddock, Becky Geesey, Donna Withington and Dorothy Meriwether  
Absent: Kennedy Wilson

**Town Administration** – Barbara Black, Michelle Ames and Terri Baines

**Guest** – George Chappell, Tina Branco, Neil Courtney, Rich Norman, Lawrence Terrio and Pat Dougherty

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

Budget Committee minutes from January 23, 2013 were amended and approved as amended.

Neil Courtney held an open discussion regarding his submitted report: “Review of the South Thomaston Fire Department and Emergency Ambulance Service”. Neither the Fire Department nor the Ambulance Service attended.

Questions included:

The necessity of a thermal imaging camera (The town’s camera is not repairable and the department is currently borrowing one from another fire department.)

Pricing and designing a fire truck

Do we share trucks with other communities?

Internet access as part of future data communication

Ambulance service in the future: do we combine with other communities?

Mr. Courtney gave kudos to the fire chief for his efforts to find and apply for grants, matching funds and other monies to purchase equipment.

**All budgets will receive a preliminary approval until the committee hears all budgets.**

Library (650)

Tina Branco presented the budget. She noted the free internet service provided by the state (\$6,000.00), grants to replace the children’s books and to please check the newly added box on the state tax return to allocate \$5.00 to libraries.

Gayle Gallant moved to approve the preliminary budget of \$1,500.00.

Chuck Hartman seconded

Motion passed 6-0

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CEO & Plumbing (560)

Lawrence Terrio presented the budget.

Donna Withington moved to approve the preliminary budget.

Chuck Hartman seconded

Motion passed 6-0

Ambulance Service (580)

Pat Dougherty and Rich Norman presented the budget. The service had 138 calls during 2012. Per diems are at full staff with one paramedic two days a week.

Discussion resulted in several changes to the proposed budget. Money for the unbudgeted Medicare Enrollment Fee of \$523.00 was added. The "Rockland, etc, ALS Charges" budget was reduced by \$523.00. The wage budget was reduced to \$57,054.00 in line with last years actual wages paid.

Becky Geesey moved to approve the preliminary budget of \$110,186.00.

Gayle Gallant seconded.

Motion passed 6-0

During discussion of the ambulance reserve portion of the 690-Reserve budget it was pointed out that the Ambulance Trust Fund has no strings attached therefore:

Gayle Gallant motioned to reduce the proposed \$10,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for the Ambulance Reserve (690-54).

Dorothy Meriwether seconded.

Motion passed 4-2

Donna Withington motioned to reduce the proposed \$4,500.00 to \$3,000.00 for the Ambulance Defib Reserve (690-55)

Chuck Hartman seconded

Motion passed 5-1

Reserves (690)

Jeff Northgraves reopened discussion to reduce further the Fire Truck Reserve (690-52) to \$40,000.00

Dorothy Meriwether moved to approve the Fire Truck Reserve (690-52) at \$40,000.00.

Donna Withington seconded.

Motion passes 4-2

Chuck Hartman moved to approve the preliminary budget of \$91,000.00.

Donna Withington seconded.

Motion passed 5-1

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### **Final Review**

Dorothy Meriwether asked to review the Fire Department (570)

Dorothy states that it is cheaper to test fire hoses in-house than it is to outsource.

Dorothy Meriwether moved to remove Fail Safe from the budget and increase wages and benefits by an amount equal to 10 hours for each of the 15 fire fighters.

Moira Paddock seconded.

Motion failed 2-4

The Fire Department (570) budget remains at \$103,844.00.

All budgets were reviewed.

Please be advised: this budget is based on anticipated state revenues and changes to the state budget may require the budget committee to reconvene and the possibility of a special Town Meeting.

Donna Withington moved to accept the proposed budget as amended @ \$995,414.00.

This amount represents an increase of 3.96% over the 2012 budget.

Gayle Gallant seconded.

Motion passed 5-1

A short meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 29, 2013 @ 5:30pm for approval of the minutes.

Meeting adjourned @ 9:58pm

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Withington