



Town of South Thomaston, Maine  
125 Spruce Head RD  
P.O. Box 147  
South Thomaston, ME 04858-0147

## **Budget Committee Meeting**

March 29, 2021

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### **Attendees:**

#### **Budget Committee**

Moira Paddock (Chair)  
Katie-Lyn Greene-Rackliff  
Linda Maltais  
Jeff Northgraves  
Beverly St. Clair  
Robert Baines  
Sondra Wallace  
Camille Minikis

#### **Select Persons**

Walter Reitz  
John Spear  
Jan Guadio

#### **Town Administrator**

Terri Baines

#### **Town Members**

Penny Ally  
John Koffel

Meeting opened at 6:00 PM.

Election of officers for 2021:

Moira Paddock elected as Chair **7 – 0 (1 abstained)**

Katie-Lyn Greene-Rackliff elected as Secretary **7 – 0 (1 abstained)**

Moira Paddock thanked Terri Baines for doing a great job on the budget and the agendas.

Selectperson Walter Reitz went over a summary document he had provided the budget committee which included 2021 budget submittal highlights. Please see a copy of this letter at the end of this document.

Since we have 3 new members on the budget committee, Moira Paddock asked them to introduce themselves.

A question came up concerning how to deal with Tax levy (LD #1) with an 18-month budget. Select Board needs to decide how to proceed.



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Walter Reitz provided the surplus number \$627,461 (unspent funds).

During the budget process Moira Paddock mentioned that as in past years, all budget approvals will be considered preliminary pending review of the entire budget.

**CEO + Plumbing Inspector (560):** (\$38,764) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Sondra Wallace moved to preliminarily approve **\$38,764**. Jeff Northgraves seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

**Planning + Appeals Boards (530):** (\$2470) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Moira asked if we need budget for the Note Taker or Mailings since we haven't used this money in the past 2 years. Walter says yes, they have been using a note taker since December this year. Jeff Northgraves moved to preliminarily approve **\$2470**. Beverly St. Clair seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

**Assessors (520):** (\$72,884) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Jeff Northgraves moved to preliminarily approve **\$72,884**. Linda Maltais seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

**Buildings & Grounds (540):** (\$79,488) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Walter Reitz mentioned Facility Maintenance is still unknown. This is a run rate number, but upgrades will need to be made in the next 18 months. Needs will be adjusted since there are some issues with the lighting in the ambulance bay, crack between old and new addition and roof leaks. There were also questions on the GBS (Gilford Butler School) maintenance and what those costs looked like. Beverly St. Claire moved to preliminarily approve **\$79,488**. Camille Minikis seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

*We looped back to the Assessors reserve account which should have been done before Buildings & Grounds.*

**Revaluation Reserve (Line 1200):** (\$10,000) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Jeff Northgraves moved to preliminarily approve funding the Revaluation Reserve **\$10,000**. Sandra Wallace seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

**Street Lights (600):** (\$4,248) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget.



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It was noted that there are 2 lights on order (town landing and salt shed), and that the town did a retro to LED in 2020 fall. Jeff Northgraves moved to preliminarily approve **\$4,248**. Beverly St. Clair seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

**Capital Expense (702):** (\$8,232) Town Administrator Terri Banes presented the budget. Jeff Northgraves moved to preliminarily approve **\$8,232**. Camille Minikis seconded: **Motion Passed 8 - 0.**

This ended the agenda items.

Jeff Northgraves motioned to adjourn.

Walter mentioned the Fire Chief and Ambulance Director will be present in tomorrow's meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM

Respectfully submitted Kate Greene

### **Copy of Walter Reitz letter:**

Dear Budget Committee Members,

Enclosed is an electronic copy of the current South Thomaston Budget submittal.

As you know, this budget covers the 18 month period from January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. We are having a bit of a challenge is setting up meaningful and relevant comparisons.

In addition, the Public Works Budget is not yet complete and some minor adjustments are required for the CEO/LPI Budget.

The Selectboard is meeting at 8:00 AM on March 29 to do some additional review and preparation for our meetings through the week.



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Some key points about the numbers:

- Wages and salaries are in line with the Selectboard guidance of a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment and a 1% general increase effective on January 1, 2021 and again on July 1, 2021. We base our assessment of a fair and appropriate COLA on the CPI forecast from the Maine Revenue Forecasting Committee rather than any national data source.
- Guidance to the Department Head/Budget Makers also stressed a priority on maintaining our assets and careful consideration of new expenditures for equipment and other assets.
- You will note that the Ambulance Service was above budget in 2020 and increases significantly in 2021-2022. A major factor here was the expansion of coverage to seven days/week in 2020 as well as the COVID requirement for an Officer in Charge as supervisory attendance at all calls. This resulted in the wages overrun in 2020 and a large part of the increase in 2021-2022. Much, if not all, of these extra wages will be reimbursed by FEMA and that work is in process.
- The Undesignated Funds Balance (Surplus) figure requires adjustment at present but will be available on Monday. The surplus will be quite a bit less than we have had going into the budget process in the past four years and thus will limit our ability to apply these funds to the budget and/or later to reduce the tax commitment.

So, some start up thoughts for your consideration. See you on Monday!

Regards,  
Walter  
Jan  
John