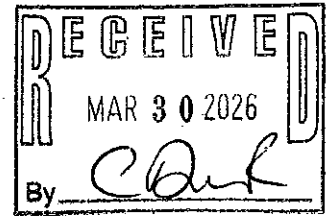


THOMASTON BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, March 24, 2026



PLEASE NOTE: *The Zoom meeting failed to record which was not realized until after the meeting, therefore no recording is available to post.*

8:00 AM

Present: Finance Board Members Luke Freimuth, Chairman, Mike Madow, Vice Chairman; Jack DeOliveira; George Seabourne; and Adam Silverman.

Also Present: Rich Sileo, First Selectman; Tracy Decker, Finance Director; Francine Coss, Superintendent of Schools; Attallah Roundtree, Business Manager-Board of Education; Bert Galpin, Superintendent WPCA

1. **Call to Order:** 7:00PM
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all.
3. **Quorum Confirmation:** The presence of quorum was confirmed.
4. **Approve or Amend Minutes:** March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting

MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by M. Madow to APPROVE the Board of Finance Minutes from the March 10, 2026, Regular Meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Old Business:

- a. **Board of Education 2026/2027 Budget Presentation:**
Attallah Roundtree presented the BOE's revised budget for the 2026/2027 Fiscal Year which included a 4.34% decrease request by the BOE, and an additional \$100,000 decrease requested by the BoF. The revised budget reflects a 1.98% increase over the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year budget. A. Roundtree then went through the budget line by line noting the Budget, the Allocated Amount (Grant/Revenue) and the Town Allocation. Chair Freimuth commended her on her Presentation. Superintendent Coss then explained the staffing cost cuts, some being temporary (Director of Curriculum) others being phased out as in classroom co-teaching models (classroom teacher and special education teacher together in classroom) due to staffing issues.

G. Seabourne asked if the town had any out-of-district placements creating a tuition income within the district; Superintendent Coss responded with one. M. Madow then inquired about the bussing contract; which Superintendent Coss stated is five-year

contract and she believes we are halfway through that contract. G. Seabourne asked if we are required to have busing that matches our pupil enrollment. Superintendent Coss responded "yes, that is law" we must have a seat for every child enrolled. Chair Freimuth asked about additional exposure, being forward thinking are there any potential expenditure conversations that may come up in 3, 6, 9 months. Superintendent Coss indicated the numbers look as though an additional kindergarten teacher will be needed for next year. Also, the Non-Certified AFSCME union is still negotiating so any potential raises are not in this budget.

- b. 2026/2027 Budget Discussion: Chair Freimuth stated since the last time the BoF met suggestions were made to the Board of Education; they took these suggestions into consideration and made these updates. The BoF then reviewed the OPM Budget Calculations. T. Decker explained the calculation. Taking the adopted budget from last year, comparing it to where the budget is now, OPM says it cannot be more the 2.64%. This is done by backing out Debt, Capital and Special Education. So, the overall budget is at 2.43% making the budget OPM compliant. Year over Year 0.95 Mills or 1.78% increase to the mill rate. Chair Freimuth asked about the \$200,000 buffer and whether some of that is already spoken for; T. Decker affirmed there are 2 potential retirements on the Town side. The Board of Education's AFSCME union still has not been settled; the snow and budget has been cut. Additionally, Seth Thomas Park had an irrigation system put in; this will be the first year of use, so the cost is unknown.

Chair Freimuth asked the Board if they had any questions or comments:

Jack DeOliveira states "he appreciates Rich and the team getting the budget done. And that based on revaluations we will probably see people living in modest homes for the last 10-15 years seeing the largest increase and that is not meant to be towards them. It's just that their homes are seeing the largest revaluations". He further states he just wanted to note that prior to the public meeting as people see that their home values have increased, this is being driven by the state not at the town level.

Chair Freimuth thanked J. DeOliveira for bringing it to light and stated he would like to see a visual presentation for the Town Meeting so the public can understand that a few things happened; the revaluation occurred the change in the Mill Rate and the cap on motor vehicle taxes. He asked First Selectman Sileo if he had any comments. First Selectman Sileo agreed that a presentation will be helpful for residents.

Discussion of Scheduling a Public Meeting ensued.

MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by G. Seabourne to APPROVE the July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027, Budget with Post Expenditures of \$31,800,042. And a base Mill Rate of 27.21. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION made by A. Silverman, Seconded by G. Seabourne to SEND the Budget to Public Hearing on April 14th, 2026, at 6:30PM in a School Auditorium to be determined. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Discussion and Possible Recommendation of Fund Policies:

T. Decker circulated the updated version of the Fund Polices after it was reviewed by the Town Attorney and the Town's audit firm. The only change made is on page 9 under **Conditions**: "Pursuant to Connecticut General Statue 7-348, in no instance shall the Fund's administrator commit the Town to a contract or purchase that exceeds the fund's appropriated balance."

MOTION made by A. Silverman, Seconded by J. DeOliveira to RECOMMEND the Fund Policies as Drafted to the Thomaston Board of Selectmen for their Approval. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by A. Silverman to SCHEDULE a Special Board of Finance Meeting on April 14th, 2026, immediately following budget hearing at the Town Meeting at a school to be determined. Motion passed unanimously.

6. New Business

a. Snow and Ice Budget overrun:

First Selectman Sileo states he asked Glen Clark, Highway Superintendent, to go through the Snow and Ice Budgets as well as his other expenses to see exactly where the budget is. He also asked him to estimate what it would cost to top up the salt. That amount is \$6200. Selectman Sileo states he did cut the Snow and Ice budget for next year, and that this is the normal practice, to top up. Many towns this year ran out and were unable to get more in a timely manner. He was asked if this was a set rate. He reported yes; this is the state rate for all towns. The BoF thanked him for bringing this to their attention, and if the budget is over \$6200, they will work it in.

7. First Selectman's Report

First Selectman Sileo reports there is a leak in the roof over the vault due to a softball sized hole in the roof. The cost of the repair is \$600. This is not a part of the new roof; but the older section is at the end of its lifespan. Joe Ouelette is getting three quotes to have the older section replaced.

The Board of Selectmen have waived the three-bid policy for the WPCA project that was approved. He explained that Tighe and Bond spec'd out equipment that is very specifically designed to fit into the existing structure. There are few companies with equipment that will fit what we have. Bert Galpin elaborated that they asked three vendors for bids on the UV System. 2 provided bids, one could not meet the specs and would require construction work to the channel. He also reported that with the Sludge Thickening there are only two vendors that can provide the equipment that fits. One of them is currently being utilized and does not generate the numbers needed.

The third item Selectman Sileo brought up was the School Feasibility Report- he states they received another draft of the report and that they have another meeting on the morning of March 25 to discuss it with the company.

8. Financial Director's Report: Nothing to add.

9. Member Comment

G. Seabourne said kudos to Rich and Tracy on the work that they did to get this budget together. Chair Freimuth concurred as well as the Board of Education.

10. Public Comment for In Person Attendees

None.

11. Adjournment

MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by A. Silverman to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:45PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Walker
Recording Secretary