THOMASTON BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

Present: Finance Board Members Luke Freimuth, Chairman; Mike Madow, Vice-Chair; George Seabourne, Jim Campbell and Jack DeOliveira via Zoom

Also Present: Rich Sileo, First Selectman; Tracy Decker, Finance Director; Amy Schumann, Library Director; Library Board Members Kate Sileo and Melanie Dobbos, Board of Education Members, Jeff Madden, Thomaston Police Chief

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:** **A**ugust 11, 2026, Regular Meeting

   MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by M. Madow to APPROVE the Board of Finance Minutes from the August 11, 2026, Regular Meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

   MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by J. Campbell AMEND the Agenda to move Old Business #6 up to #5 and New Business #5 to #6. And item now 6(f.) Discuss/Approve Bids received for BOE Operational Review move to 6(a.) under new business and the rest moved down alphabetically. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Old Business:**
   a. 25/26 and 26/27 BOE budget review: Chair Freimuth begins with we have received no addition information or clarification as it relates to the 25-26 budget since the last meeting. He understands two votes by the BOE to curb spending have been voted down which demonstrates to the BOF that the BOE is not recognizing that a problem exists as it relates to spending and is not taking any meaningful actions as it relates to that. It has been communicated to the First Selectman Sileo and Town Finance Director Tracy Decker; by the BOE's interim finance director that the current overrun is about $450,000 and we believe they have neglected to take some additional information into consideration that was provided by the Town Finance office as it relates to certain expenditures that hit the account but were not necessarily recorded as journal entries. Which brings the total overrun closer to $576,000. In conjunction with the current overrun, the BOF was made aware of certain overruns from the prior year. Approximately $213,000 relating to repairs to an HVAC system at one of the schools, Benefits, and AFSCME retro pay for contract negotiations. The amounts the BOF was

not made aware of; total about $363,000. With no information forthcoming. The BOF has requested Two plus Ten forecast, two months of Actuals and ten months of forecasting based on the new budget numbers. They were told the soonest they would have that information is December.
This information is shared because the BOF is about to vote on whether they would like to approve to move forward to the Board of Selectmen; a motion to approve and schedule a town vote on contracting an audit firm to come in and review the BOE finances.

G. Seabourne asks if the search for audit companies has been narrowed. Chair Freimuth moves the discussion to new business. To review bids. He asks First Selectman Sileo if he has any comments on Old Business before walking the BOF through the bids received.

First Selectman Sileo says he feels Chair Freimuth covered a lot of the concerns. He states he personally has sent some requests which have not been responded to. He also is concerned there is difficulty delivering payroll to the employes.

6. New Business:

a. Discuss/Approve: Bids received for BOE Operational review:
An RFP was drafted, placed on the town website. First Selectman Sileo says he also reached out to a few companies with the RFP. 2 companies declined to bid due to the timeline. Another came in with a good bid, but the contract stated they would not provide a strong attestation to their work. The other is PKF O'Connor Davies, which the town has used for some time. They recommend taking the audit one phase at a time. PKF O'Connor Davies for the first phase, which is $31,625.

MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by M. Madow to ACCEPT the bid of PKF O'Connor Davies and ENGAGE them for the First Phase of the Board of Education Audit in the sum of $31,625. To be taken from Contingency.

Discussion:
J. Campbell asks if they will be working with the Town Finance Office or the Board of Education. Chair Freimuth responds with the BOE, but he would like to entertain a motion to give the Town Finance team access to the systems in a read only capacity so they have people familiar with all that is going on, because the BOE does not have a finance department right now. To have people who can be responsive. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION made by J. Campbell, Seconded by M. Madow to REQUEST the Board of Education, in conjunction with this audit PROVIDE Tracy Decker and the Finance Department read only Access so that the Finance Department can assist in the audit.

Discussion:
First Selectman Sileo believes if the Town Finance Department does not have access, there is no way to get this audit done in terms of available resources on the BOE's end.

Chair Freimuth asks if Nathan Viera, BOE Chair, has any reservations. Chair Viera states "he loves this motion."
Motion passes unanimously.

First Selectman Sileo asks Chair Freimuth if he can add to this. He states they will need the BOE to pass this motion as quickly as possible. He goes further stating he is meeting with Corporation Council to draft a Town Meeting. As soon as that is drafted, it will go to the Board of Selectman, which will start the clock on the two weeks' notice.

b. Discuss/Approve Fire Department request re: Replacement of Utility Truck

   MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by G. Seabourne to TABLE the Fire Department request to replace the Utility Truck. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Update: Library use of bequest/grant funds to update bathrooms.
   Tracy Decker clarifies the Fund Administration Policy stating that departments using their own funds need to inform the BOF and follow town purchasing policies and if over $10,000; bring it to the Board of Selectman for vendor approval.

   Amy Schumann, Library Director, states at the last Library Board meeting they voted to spend up to $10,000 to make continuing improvements to the bathrooms. She states they have $6,646.70 in grant money that is meant to be used for bathroom upgrades. She says the Library Board is still working on getting quotes.

d. Discuss/Approve: Wage increase for Library Level 1 new hire
   Kate Sileo from the Library Board of Trusties states the board is looking to fill a vacant position. The current salary range for this post is $17.50-$18.95. She goes on to say in this region, which is Region 1; the entry level pay for this position is $20.15. Because they have had this vacancy, there is some money left in the budget. She goes on to explain that would keep them under budget for the year if they hired someone by the next pay period. M. Madow asks if they know what it will do to next year's budget.

   Library Board members discuss numbers.

   MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by J. Campbell to INCREASE the pay to $20.15 per hour for the vacant position at the library. Motion passes unanimously.

First Selectman Sileo reports a minimum wage increase coming up in January. And that he may be back to close the gap it is creating for existing staff with time in and or degrees and experience. He states that as the minimum wage comes up, we are not moving fast enough.

e. Discuss/Approve Electrical work to separate Opera House usage

MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by G. Seabourne to TABLE Electrical work to separate Opera House usage. Motion passed unanimously.

f. Discuss/Approve Repairs to communication system/cameras damaged by lightning storm.
   Tracy Decker explains a lightning storm took out several communication towers and the camera's up at Nystrom's. The communication system has been repaired for a total of $8,224. The cameras have not been repaired yet; so, no total. If it is more than $10,000 which is the deductible, a claim can be submitted. Her recommendation is to overrun the repair line in the communication budget for now and once the total cost is known, and insurance reimbursements then transfers can be made.

   First, Selectman Sileo brings up the libraries' security/fire/HVAC systems which incurred damage during the same storm. He asks if these can be combined. Tracy Decker says she will investigate it.

   He also says they are looking into a grounding study for the library as it has been struck several times.

g. Discuss/Approve Separation of vote on Town and Board of Education Budgets
   Discussion ensued. No action taken.

h. Discuss/Approve: 25/26 year-end transfers.
   Chair Freimuth brings to the Boards attention three of the transfers greater than $20,000. Include items discussed earlier that the BOE had already brought to the BOF's attention that was budgeted for in the 25-26 budget; which totals about $213,000. What is not included is the other $363,000. in overages because that is currently under discussion as to whether to leave it on the balance sheet of the BOE or move it to the town side with the expectation that the town may or may not be made whole in the future.

   Overruns less than $2000. Which are approved by the First Selectman and the Chair of the Board of Finance.

Unemployment Expense-	$ 312.
Transfer Station-Dumpster Hauling	$ 28.
Engineering-Timing issues	$1,601.00
Economic Development-Banners	$ 93.00
	$2,034.00

MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by M. Madow to APPROVE the TRANSFER $2,034.00 in the 2025-2026 Fiscal Budget from CONTIGENCY to offset the overspends less than $2000. Motion passed unanimously.

Overruns between $2001.-$19,999. These are items the Finance Director has mentioned to the BOF throughout the year.

Elections-Primary/Early Voting	$6,514.
Emergency Management-Generator repairs	$2,320.
Animal Control-Billed for 24/25 and 25/26	$5798.
Fire Hydrants- CT Water only estimates 3mos out	$3,253.
Solid Waste and Recycling-tip fees based on tonnage and household waste days	$6,853.
	$24,738.

MOTION made by J. Campbell, Seconded by M. Madow to ALLOCATE out of Contingency $24,738. To Cover the 2025/2026 Budget overruns between $2001-$19,999. Motion passed unanimously.

Transfers over $20,000. Subject to Town Meeting.

Town Hall Operations and Maintenance-Building Repairs. Electricity.	$22,251.
Snow and Ice Removal-Filled salt sheds for next year	$34,749.
Education-Emergency boiler repair	$34,572.
Education-Health care overage	$89,674.
Education-AFSCME Retro wages	$88,427.
	$269,673.

MOTION made by M. Madow, Seconded by J. Campbell to SEND these expenditures and their offsets to Town Meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

7. First Selectman's Report: First Selectman Sileo says we talked about the library; we still have a couple more repairs there. And we will see if we can tie it all into one insurance submission. And making sure the library is properly grounded.

He says the second item is the whole in Elm Street; a very old culvert runs from the park to the parking lot area, and it has collapsed. He has met with Thigh and Bond to prepare emergency engineering because they know the area from the LOTCIP Project.

8. Finance Director's Report:

Finance Director Decker states the Registrar of Voters received an Early Voting Grant for $5000. Which will offset some of the salaries.

9. <u>Member Comment:</u>

Chair Freimuth says as he reflects on the items discussed tonight; the one thing he would like to ensuring that as we get ready for our annual audit; making sure all expenditures are accounted for from the BOE.

10. <u>Public Comment:</u>

Diane LaBonte says I cannot believe you are considering splitting the budgets; we tried that. We have all kinds of records. She then asks about the audit of the BOE finances; is it a forensic audit because we wanted that years ago and it was shot down.

Finance Director Decker answers it is a special operational and intern control review to find out what went wrong and how it can be fixed going forward.

D. LaBonte asks why not a forensic audit. Or did you only get prices for one kind.

Finance Director Decker responds we were focusing on what we thought would solve the problem; there is no fraud suspected.

11. <u>Adjournment</u>

MOTION made by G. Seabourne, Seconded by J. Campbell to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:45PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Walker
Recording Secretary