
**MINUTES
THOMASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING**

Thomaston Town Hall
Meeting Room One
Monday, January 30, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Members:

**Roxy Fainer, Chairperson
Kathleen Freimuth, Vice Chairperson
Anne Petrucci, Secretary
Alexander Lee, Treasurer
Francine Coss, Superintendent**

**Beth Campbell
David Colavecchio
Maureen McMahon
Scott Theriault
Frank Treglia**

1. Establishment of a Quorum and Call to Order

1.1. **Chairperson Roxy Fainer** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1.2. Board Member in attendance: **Chairperson Roxy Fainer, Alexander Lee, Superintendent Francine Coss Beth Campbell, David Colavecchio, Scott Theriault, and Frank Treglia.**

1.3. Others in attendance: John Perrucci, Jonathan Kozlak, Kristin Bernier, Eric Martin, Aimee Martin and George Seabourne.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

1.1. **Chairperson Roxy Fainer** led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Presentation

- 2017-2018 Operating and Capital Budgets

4. Board of Education Budget Discussion

5. Possible Action on 2017-2018 Operating and Capital Budgets

Alexander Lee motioned and Beth Campbell seconded to accept/approve the proposed 2017-2018 Operating and Capital Budgets

Discussion:

Scott Theriault asked what the Board of Education was approving.

Superintendent Coss explained that the Board is making a motion so that the discussions of the motions are recorded in the meeting minutes. Therefore, when the Board votes, amends or even tables a motion, the discussion will show an explanation in the meeting minutes.

Scott Theriault asked if the proposed budget is available to the public.

Superintendent Coss replied not yet.

Scott Theriault stated that once the Board approves the budget then it will be part of the minutes.

Superintendent Coss replied that once the meeting is over, the results will be part of the minutes and then the minutes will be shared with the public.

Scott Theriault stated that the budget is going to change.

Superintendent Coss said the public knows that the budget is going to change. The public will see the budget posted as a draft. **Superintendent Coss** added that she is not encouraging the Board to vote on the budget tonight, but to put a motion on the table so that the discussion can be recorded in the minutes for the public to see what the Board's priorities are and what the Board hopes to achieve with this budget.

Alexander Lee stated that making amendments to the agenda would allow the Board to come to conclusions regarding individual issues.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked Aimee Turner, Director of Pupil Services, if the Board does not take any action on the preschool issue and waits for further information on whether the Board receives the grant, what is the drop-dead date for getting that information to the public for the lottery.

Aimee Turner replied Wednesday, February 1, 2017. The lottery needs to be completed by the end of February.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked why.

Aimee Turner stated that she has to submit all of the documentation.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked if it was due to State reasons or bookkeeping records in Thomaston.

Aimee Turner said it is so that Thomaston Public Schools will get the information so that students interested in the new Preschool program do not go to other preschools. Other preschools make parents commit to their programs in February.

Superintendent Coss stated that Thomaston Public Schools could lose the clientele.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer is concerned that Ms. Turner wants an answer on the preschool tonight because of advertising.

Aimee Turner explained that the advertisement would go into the paper and the advertisement would say that there is a half-day program, morning or afternoon and to come to Black Rock School to fill out paperwork if interested.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked **David Colavecchio** if Aimee Turners' explanation sounded okay to him.

David Colavecchio stated the explanation is good and he just wants to be realistic with the program as far as the numbers go. David also stated that he wants to be fair to parents.

Alexander Lee stated that the Administrators said the program was a priority regardless of the grant money.

Superintendent Coss said that was correct.

Aimee Turner stated that during the original discussion back in October 2016, the program was made a priority because thirty-five (35) percent of the kindergarten students had never stepped into a preschool and those students are struggling.

Jonathan Kozlak, Principal of Black Rock School stated that the student s are coming in way behind the other students who have attended a preschool and then struggle to get to where the student needs to be.

Aimee Turner stated that the Board of Education should know by the end of February about the status of the grant.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked John Perrucci, Thomaston High School Principal, if he feels strongly enough about the preschool program to give up his proposed history teacher.

John Perrucci replied yes and that the preschool program is essential, especially with our demographic.

Superintendent Coss stated that she did not hear any upset or discontent with the priority of the preschool across all the Administrators.

Kristin Bernier, Thomaston Center School Principal said that all research states that quality preschool programs significantly benefit students for the rest of their lives.

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David Colavecchio said if the Board could have had the money that was spent on that grant, then the Board would have money.

Eric Martin, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment said that there is a consequence when students come in with that type of deficit. The financial repercussions over their years as a student, far exceed the startup cost of what a preschool would be.

Kristin Bernier said you pay for it down the road, in middle school, high school and beyond.

David Colavecchio stated that these comments are the kind of things the Board needs to know to go sell and justify the program in tough times.

John Perrucci said that if the students start in the preschool here in Thomaston, they might stay here rather than go elsewhere.

Superintendent Coss said the way that the budget is built is each department contributes then each department sits in a room together and they decide what is a priority.

Superintendent Coss reiterated that she did not hear any push back about the preschool program because of its value overall.

Chairperson Roxy Fainer asked the Board if there were any further questions.

Superintendent Coss reminded the Board of the following informal requests made by board members so far:

- Social Studies teacher at a master's level one - sixty-thousand (\$60,000)
- Field equipment for the track at an unknown price
- Half year of outplacement of a student - about fifteen to thirty-thousand (\$15,000 – \$30,000)
- Chrome books that the Board asked for in capital for - twenty-five thousand seven hundred and forty-three dollars (\$25,743)

Alexander Lee moved and **Beth Campbell seconded** that the Board of Education amends the proposed budget to include the preschool program regardless of the grant revenue.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
5	1 David Colavecchio	0

Alexander Lee moved and **Frank Treglia seconded** that the Board of Education include the approximate sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000) for a Social Studies teacher at Thomaston High School in the 2017-2018 budget.

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Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
5	1 Scott Theriault	0

Alexander Lee moved and Beth Campbell seconded that the Board of Education postpone the discussion on the track equipment until the February Board meeting.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
6	0	0

Alexander Lee moved and Beth Campbell seconded that the Board of Education include thirty-thousand dollars (\$30,000) for an outplaced student in the 2017-2018 Special Education budget.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
6	0	0

Alexander Lee moved and Beth Campbell seconded that the Board of Education accept/approve the amended 2017-2018 Operating and Capital Budgets.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
6	0	0

6. Adjournment

David Colavecchio moved and Frank Theriault seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:33 p.m.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes	No	Abstain
6	0	0