

## Annual Budget Policy

- The Board of Finance shall hold meetings during budget season (February - April) in accordance with the following schedule:
  - February - 3 meetings
    - 1 Regular meeting followed by budget review
    - 1 Special meeting on budget review
    - 1 Special meeting for BOE budget presentation
  - March - 3 meetings
    - 1 Regular meeting followed by budget review
    - 1 Special meeting for CIP committee/budget review
    - 1 Special meeting on budget review
  - April - 2 meetings
    - 1 Regular meeting - Set proposed mill rate
    - 1 Public hearing followed by Special meeting to amend budget if necessary. Public hearing shall be held no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April.
- Town departmental budgets shall be submitted to the Board of Finance by their first regular monthly meeting in February (one month earlier than prior years).
- Education Department shall present their budget to the Board of Finance by the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting in February.
- The Capital Improvement Committee shall present their recommendations by the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in March.
- Public hearing shall be held no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April.
  - BOE shall be contacted the beginning of April for auditorium availability for the public hearing and the annual Town budget meeting.
  - Selectman's office shall check with registrar of voters and Town Clerk regarding Town meeting and referendum dates, if applicable.
  - The Board of Finance shall advertise the Public Hearing (no legal notice requirement) no less than 5 days and no more than 15 days prior and post in the Town Clerks office no less than 24 hrs prior.
- Following the Public Hearing:
  - Board of Finance shall meet to amend the budget if necessary.
  - Board of Selectman shall meet and call for the Annual Town Budget meeting and/or referendum if applicable.
  - Finance Director shall finalize the budget document, prepare the budget advertisement on behalf of the Board of Finance for the Thomaston Express and post the final budget on the website.
  - Selectman's office shall publish the legal notices and warning of the Annual Budget meeting and/or referendum (no less than 5 days and no more than 15 days prior) and post in the Town Clerks office (no less than 24 hrs prior).
- The Annual Town Budget meeting will be held two weeks following the Public hearing, but no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> week of May.
- The referendum, if applicable, shall be held no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May.
- The Board of Finance shall meet following the referendum, when applicable, to set the mill rate.

- The Tax Collector shall receive a letter from the Board of Finance Chairman stating the tax rate for next fiscal year, the amount of state aid, and what the mill rate would be without state aid.
- If the budget should fail, the Board of Finance shall call for a special meeting no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June to revise the budget.

Adopted by the Board of Finance on July 8, 2008.

*Statutory references:*

The budget hearing must be held at least 2 weeks before the annual budget meeting (C.G.S. Section 7-344). There is no legal notice requirement other than the FOI requirement of posting an agenda 24 hours before the hearing. If legal notice is published, the rule of thumb is 5 days prior to the day of the meeting, counting the day of publication but not the day of the meeting (C.G.S. Section 7-1).

The proposed budget need not be published prior to the budget hearing, but must be published after the hearing and at least 5 days prior to the annual budget meeting (C.G.S. Sections 7-344, 7-390).

The legal notice (aka the Warning) must be published at least 5 days before the annual budget meeting (C.G.S. Section 7-1).

If the budget is to be voted on at the meeting, individual line items may be reduced by amendment at the meeting, but may not be increased or added (C.G.S. Section 7-344).

If the budget is to be voted on by referendum, the meeting may only discuss but not amend or act on the budget.

The referendum must be held within 7 - 14 days after the budget meeting at a date and time to be determined by the meeting, but if not, by the Board of Selectmen (C.G.S. Section 7-7).

The Board of Finance meets immediately after the adoption of the budget to set the mill rate (C.G. S. Section 7-344).

If the budget is defeated, the process reverts to the point where the Board of Finance holds a special meeting to revise the budget and to send it back to the budget meeting. There is no budget hearing or budget publication requirement at this stage.

The subsequent budget meeting is then called a reconvened budget meeting.

The budget may either be submitted to referendum by the Board of Selectmen or by petition of at least 200 electors and taxpayers (C.G.S. Section 7-7).

SAMPLE BOARD OF FINANCE  
MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2009  
BASED ON PROPOSED POLICY

<b>January 13,</b>	Regular Meeting (Selectmen's meeting room)
<b>February 10,</b>	Regular Meeting, Review non-education budgets
<b>February 24,</b>	Review Board of Education budget
<b>March 3,</b>	Continue budget review
<b>March 10,</b>	Regular Meeting, Meet with Capital Improvements Comm
<b>March 24,</b>	Continue budget review
<b>March 31,</b>	Continue review (if necessary); set proposed tax rate
<b>April 8,</b>	Public Hearing at Thomaston High School. BOF meeting follows to amend budget if necessary
<b>April 14,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>April 22,</b>	Annual Town Budget Meeting at Thomaston High School. BOF meeting follows to set mil rate.
<b>May 12,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>June 9,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>July 14,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>August 11,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>September 8,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>October 13,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>November 10,</b>	Regular Meeting
<b>December 8,</b>	Regular Meeting