

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD

Selectmen's Meeting

November 16, 2009

The Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Members present: Andrew M. Santom, Vice Chairman
M. Patricia Jewett
George A. Lambert

Absent: Frank A. Byron, Chairman
Steven D. Perry

NONPUBLIC SESSION

A **MOTION** was made to go into nonpublic session per RSA91-A:3II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, etc. It was seconded. Roll call: A. Santom, yes; M.P. Jewett, yes; G. Lambert, yes. Motion carried 3-0-0.

A **MOTION** was made to come out of nonpublic session. It was seconded. Roll call: A. Santom, yes; M.P. Jewett, yes; G. Lambert, yes. Motion carried 3-0-0.

A **MOTION** was made to keep the minutes nonpublic. It was seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

Also present for public session: Linda Langille, Office Manager

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT ITEMS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Consent Items: Veterans Tax Credit. **Any Other Business:** Donation Drive

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

MELANSON/HEATH

Frank Biron and John Sullivan of Melanson/Heath came before the Board to discuss a proposal to audit the Town books for 2008 and 2009. Mr. Biron went on to explain what the firm would provide to the Town of Litchfield which is a risk based audit of record keeping practices,

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evaluating control methods, tax collection, etc. John Sullivan is a partner and a fraud examiner. Mr. Biron told the Board that the Melanson/Heath audits 150 municipalities.

Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen engages Melanson/Heath to deal with the audit for Litchfield 2008 and 2009. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

ETHICS FORMATION COMMITTEE

Janice Raccio and Lisa Garand came forward and presented the final copy of the Code of Ethics to be voted by the townspeople. There was a discussion on a proposed warrant article and whether or not to include the 2010 budget within the article as recommended by the Budget Committee. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

STREET LIGHTS

Mr. John Poulos came forward to talk about converting to a Rate EOL program. A contract with PSNH will be provided for Town Counsel's review and this matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

FIRE HYDRANT COMMITTEE

The Board met with members of the Fire Hydrant Committee to discuss a possible warrant article to engage the Town of Litchfield taxpayers to pay for the fees associated with the hydrant cost. Presently people on Pennichuck water pay a monthly fee of \$12.59 and the Committee is recommending that all residents share the cost (about \$7.00) even residents that are on wells. Mr. Poulos stated that 58% of the townspeople are on Pennichuck water and 64% are within 1000 feet of a hydrant. If the proposed warrant article passes, the Town would be writing a check to Pennichuck to pay the fees for the whole Town.

Mr. Lambert indicated the Town should have an agreement in place with Pennichuck before putting a warrant article before the voters to approve and suggested an advisory type warrant article asking for an opinion from the taxpayers to move forward...because it is not known what it is going to cost. The warrant article was read by Mr. Poulos: *Shall the Town of Litchfield vote to direct the Board of Selectmen to enter into a new agreement with the Pennichuck East Utility such that the Town pays Pennichuck East Utility directly from the General Fund for fire protection.* All in all, the Selectmen need to determine whether or not Pennichuck is in agreement with this proposal and also what the financial impact would be to the taxpayers.

Mr. Santom **MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen engage Pennichuck and send a letter as to how to deal with the feasibility of this warrant article. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

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HUNTING

Police Chief Joseph O'Brion was present. Chief O'Brion told the Board he received a complaint forwarded from the Chairman regarding hunters on Town property near Tanager Way. The neighbors feel the area (19 acres) is too small to allow hunters because there are houses on all three sides of the Town's property. Talk ensued as to the hunting laws. No action was taken because the Board felt that there is more investigation needed on the matter.

KEYS

Mr. Steve Perry had provided a report of those individuals needing keys to access areas in the Town Hall. Mrs. Langille will check with those individuals who are to be provided keys to make certain they would have the right keys to access areas they would be allowed entrance.

COMMITTEE/DISTRICT REPORTS

School Board - There was a School Board meeting last Tuesday and they will be meeting tomorrow night.

Women's Club - There was a blood drive held on Saturday.

Food Collection - The Knights of Columbus held a food drive at the Incinerator on Saturday.

Budget Committee - The Budget Committee will be meeting twice a week beginning next week to review the School Budget. Mr. Lambert went over items the Budget Committee recommended reviewing:

Ethics budget - The budget was zeroed out by the Budget Committee.

Highway budget - They reduced the amount of money available to do Roberts Road and recommends using Highway Block money instead. They left \$25,000 in maintenance line item.

COLA - The Budget Committee requested that the Selectmen put a warrant article for the adjustment of COLA. It was pointed out that there was an agreement or a warrant regarding COLA for non-bargaining that they would receive the same percentage as the bargaining. If it is put on a warrant, the benefits that go along with the COLA would have to be included in the warrant. Mr. Santom **MOTIONED** to keep the COLA rate in the budget and not put it as a warrant article. Mr. Lambert seconded. Mrs. Jewett suggested waiting when the other two members are present. Mr. Lambert said the Budget Committee needs to know by Thursday. Motion carried 3-0-0.

Police Budget - It is recommended by the Budget Committee to cut court costs, training and

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the police cruiser. Mr. Lambert we are obligated to send out officers to court and training. Chief O'Brion present. He told the Board they were supposed to have two cruisers last year and only purchased one and only one is being purchased this year and he feels may have to shut down part of the patrol because the vehicles are unsafe. It was also pointed the cost to keep the older vehicles in operation is expensive. Talk ensued.

- Court/Training - Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** Account 01-4210.30-146 in the amount of \$4,652.50. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Mr. Santom **AMENDED MOTION** to set line item 01-4210.30-146 to \$4,654.00. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Amended motion carried 3-0-0. Main amended motion 3-0-0.

Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** Account 01-4210.30-144 in the amount of \$4,052. Mr. Santom seconded. Mr. Lambert withdrew motion and **MOTIONED** \$4,052. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

- Cruiser - Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** that the Board of Selectmen represent their position of wanting another cruiser for the police department to the Budget Committee in the amount of \$58,000 line 01-4210.30-760. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

CONSENT ITEM

The request for a Veterans Credit needs to be re-evaluated.

DETAILS

Chief O'Brion was present and provided a handout of proposed detail rates to include overtime. This was discussed. The rate previously approved for detail was \$46.00, officer makes \$35.00 an hour, but the Board had not discussed overtime rates which is part of the contract Article 13.

Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** that we add to our current calculation for our detail rate for overtime after 8 hours consistent with our contract the rate of \$72.00 an hour. Mr. Santom seconded. A letter will be prepared by Chief O'Brion to be handed out to customers regarding the regular rate and the rate after 8 hours of detail. Motion carried 3-0-0.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Donation Drive - Mr. Santom **MOTIONED** that we authorize Selectman Jewett to establish her

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donation drive for men and women in the service. Mr. Lambert seconded. Vote: Mrs. Jewett abstained. Motion carried 2-0-1.

There being no further business, Mr. Lambert **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Jewett seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Andrew M. Santom
Acting Chairman

M. Patricia Jewett

George A. Lambert

Lorraine Dogopoulos
Selectmen's Secretary