

**Minutes of
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting**

Held on October 9, 2008

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday October 9, 2008 in the Media Room at Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

PRESENT: J Harte (Vice Chairman), P Parker, D Miller, M Falzone, R Peebles, B McCue, G Lambert (Selectmen's representative)

ABSENT: B Lemire (Chairman)

Mr. Harte called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. Falzone pointed out that the Police Chief's name was incorrect at various points in the minutes of the meeting of September 18, 2008, and should be amended.

MOTION: by Mr. McCue

Move to approve the minutes of the meeting on September 18, 2008 as amended

SECOND: Mr. Falzone

VOTE: 6-0-1 (Mr. Miller abstained)

Mr. Parker noted that the date at the top of the first page of the minutes of the meeting of September 25, 2008 was incorrect and should be amended.

MOTION: by Mr. Parker

Move to approve the minutes of the meeting on September 25, 2008 as amended

SECOND: Mr. Falzone

VOTE: 6-0-1 (Mr. McCue – abstained)

Mr. Falzone pointed out that the amount for the Halloween detail should be changed to \$12,000 (page 3, paragraph 2), and also that the line item on page 2 should be changed from 4220.10.740 to 4220.20.740.

MOTION: by Mr. Miller

Move to approve the minutes of the meeting on October 2, 2008 as amended.

SECOND: Mr. McCue

VOTE: 6-0-1 (Mr. Harte abstained).

3. TOWN BUDGET REVIEW

Planning Board (a/c 4191.10)

Mr. Steve Perry presented the budget for the Planning Board highlighting the changes for the 2009 budget.

Line item 125 (Administrative Assistant Wages): Mr. Perry explained the increase was a step increase approved by the Board of Selectmen which will be effective April 5, 2009.

It was noted that the existing figures have been used for the benefit line items until the new numbers are known.

Line item 328 (Public Notices & Ads) : This line has been cut by \$100. Mr. Harte asked for justification for the \$1,000, stating that it appeared too high based on spending in prior years. There was a discussion and Mr. Perry provided his justification.

Line item 341 (Telephone): This line has been zeroed out due to changes explained by Selectman Lambert. He stated the Board of Selectmen has not decided which account to charge the costs for the T1 service to, but pointed out the Town should see a significant drop in cost. He also explained about backup phone lines which they will retain for emergencies.

Line item 344 (Secretarial – Steno Services): Mr. Perry stated the amount in this line is based on 2 three hour meetings per month.

Line item 392 (NRPC Planner): The hours for this person have increased to 34 hours per month @ \$55 per hour.

Line item 393 (Special Project): Selectman Lambert explained that the Planning Board Chairman had requested additional money for a special project for the re-alignment of impact fees. Mr. Perry reported he would like to spend the money this year but there are insufficient funds in the budget. He then explained that the Board of Selectmen would look for

the required funds elsewhere in the current but and if they can achieve this they will zero out this line for next year at the Deliberative Session. Mr. Perry provided additional information regarding the cost of the project,

Line item 550 (Printing): This line was reduced by \$100 and will be used for outside printing jobs.

Line item 560 (NRPC Dues): It was confirmed that this fee is a set rate which increases each year and Mr. Dilworth Jr. explained it is based on population and equalization value. Mr. Perry explained it is for membership to the Regional Planning Commission, and Mr. Dilworth Jr. provided information on what the Town gets for the fee. Selectman Lambert pointed out the Town is required by law to belong to a Regional Planning Commission.

Line item 620 (Office Supplies): This is a reduction on last year of \$50. In response to a query from Mr. Harte regarding the low expenditure to date this year, Mr. Perry explained he is trying to cut back in other areas in order to get the special project done this year.

Line item 625 (Postage & Envelopes): There was a discussion regarding the low expenditure to date this year and the requested amount.

Line item 631 (Equipment Repairs & Maintenance): Mr. Harte was informed this line was for computer, digital etc equipment.

Line item 680 (Copier Charges): Mr. Perry stated the Town has not charged anything for copying at this point for 2008, and Selectman Lambert explained the Board of Selectmen will zero out this line unless outside services are used at any point. There followed a discussion on how often the Planning Board use outside services, and Mr. Perry explained it was usually only an average of twice per year and they use the Printing line item (550) for jobs which had to be sent outside.

Line item 810 (Mileage & Tolls): This line has been increased by \$50 to make up for increased costs in gas.

Line item 811 (Seminars & Conventions): This has been increased by \$150 as they overspent this year in this line and would like to use it next year as have the Planning Board is fairly new.

Discussion:

Line item 125 (Administrative Assistant Wages): Mr. Perry reported in response to a query from Mr. Miller, that Ms. McKibben had been taken off the step scale at one point in time, and this placed her on the scale in line with four other towns which were researched, at \$20.88 per hour. In

response to Mr. Miller's point that this was an increase of approximately 13.8%, Selectman Lambert explained Ms. McKibben had not received an increase for a while and this brought her in line with others performing the same job in other towns.

Mr. Miller pointed out that benefits should be dealt with at the end of the year, and there followed a discussion with Mr. Harte clarifying the process for dealing with benefit costs in the budget. Mr. Miller pointed out it was hard to compare these year over year, and Selectman Lambert explained this will be addressed by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Falzone queried why line item 210 (Health Insurance) has changed, as it had previously been zero, and Mr. Perry explained that her increase in hours made Ms. McKibben eligible for benefits.

There was a discussion regarding the CIP, and it was agreed that Mr. Perry would obtain a copy of this for Budget Committee members. It was pointed out that it is also on the NRPC web site.

Mr. Harte clarified for Mr. Perry that the Committee was holding off voting until the end of the month to ensure that all information had been obtained.

Health Department (a/c 4411.10)

Mr. Kevin Lynch presented his budget, stating he had highlighted changes on the budget sheet in yellow, and he went through the budget line by line.

Line item 356 (Water Analysis): Mr. Lynch reported that the water testing at Darrah Pond is for e. coli and the number of tests which are completed depends on the weather.

Line item 433 (Internet/Computer): He explained he no longer requires this line, stating he uses his own computer

Line item 560 (Dues/Subscriptions): It was pointed out that the slight increase in this line is because dues to the Health Officer Association have increased.

Line item 620 (Office Supplies): This line has been reduced by \$50.

Line item 624 (Film/Photo Supplies): This line has been zeroed out as the department is sharing a digital camera with the Planning Board.

Line item 625 (Postage/Envelopes): The increase in this line takes into account a postage increase in 2009 which is scheduled for 2009.

Line item 680 (Copier Charges): Mr. Lynch explained that these charges are taken care of by the Town hall.

Line item 810 (Mileage/Tolls): Mr. Lynch stated he has reduced this line by \$90 as he uses a Town vehicle wherever possible.

Line item 811 (Seminars/Conventions): It was reported that the \$10 increase in this line is required to cover spring and fall Health Officer Seminars at \$35 each.

Overall Mr. Lynch reported a reduction in the Health Department budget of 10.11%.

Code Enforcement (a/c 4241.20)

Mr. Lynch presented this budget, and the following were highlighted:

Line item 120 (Code Enforcement Salary): Selectman Lambert explained this line has decreased as Mr. Lynch was hired at a lower salary as a new employee.

Line item 125 (Temporary Inspector Wages): Mr. Lynch this line has been reduced and is now based on 120 hours at \$20 per hour.

Line item 210 (Health Insurance): Mr. Lynch explained he does not require health insurance.

Line item 341 (Telephone): this line has been reduced, and the remaining amount is an estimate for a cell phone

Line item 433 (Communications Equipment Maintenance): The amount in this line is for a phone battery.

Line item 550 (Printing): This line is unchanged from last year for forms etc. Mr. Lynch explained he is looking at the Avatar building permit process which the Town has already purchased, and he is looking at implementing this with Avatar. He explained the goal is to have some forms online. He also explained there are new statutes for gas appliances etc. which now require permits, and there was a discussion with Mr. Harte regarding the permitting process.

Line item 560 (Dues & Subscriptions): This line has been reduced by \$235 and Mr. Lynch provided the figures for each association.

Line item 620 (Office Supplies): Mr. Lynch explained he is trying to reconcile the filing system and may need to purchase a file cabinet and supplies.

Line item 624 (Film & Photo Supplies): The money in this line is for purchasing a disk for the digital camera being shared.

Line item 625 (Postage & Envelopes): Mr. Lynch reported he may be able to reduce this line if they get the forms on line and reduces the need for mailing permits.

Line item 631 (Office Equipment Maintenance): The money in this line is for typewriter supplies as the typewriter is used in emergencies.

Line item 635 (Vehicle Fuel): He stated the amount expended to date is down as Mr. Lynch was using his own vehicle until he got a Town vehicle.

Line item 660 (Vehicle Repair/Maintenance): It was explained this is a basic amount for the replacement of oil, wipers etc.

Line item 663 (Radio Installation/Repairs): This has been included in case repairs are required for the vehicle, they he stated he does not expect to use this line as it is a new vehicle.

Line item 670 (Code Materials): This line is for buying commentaries to go with new books which were bought this year. Mr. Lynch stated he is hoping to upgrade to computerized versions.

Line item 680 (Copier Charges): This line has been zeroed out due to the change over to the Town hall.

Line item 696 (Safety Equipment Purchases): This line will be used to purchase equipment to keep in his car. Mr. Lynch stated he had not purchased these items this year at the request of the Board of Selectmen.

Line item 740 (Equipment Purchases): The increase in this line is for a laptop and peripherals and Mr. Lynch explained why the equipment is necessary. Mr. Harte asked whether the software for GIS can be shared without an additional charge, and Selectman Lambert confirmed the data was purchased for all the use of all Town departments.

Action: Mr. Lynch offered to look into whether the software license is multi client.

There was a discussion regarding the fact that the Town is considering an IT staff member, and also about the cost of the computer equipment.

Action: Mr. Lynch stated he would obtain a quote for a better price on the laptop.

Line item 750 (Furniture/Fixture Purchase): Mr. Lynch stated he intends to purchase a used bookcase and there was a discussion regarding this.

Line item 760 (Vehicle Lease/Purchase): Mr. Lynch confirmed 2009 will be the second year of the lease.

Line item 811 (Seminars/Conventions): Mr. Lynch stated he had priced out the certifications he wishes to take and testing seminars he needs to attend and reduced this line by \$220 as a result.

Overall Mr. Lynch reported a reduction in the 2009 of 20.08%.

4. **RECEIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PRESENTED ON TOWN BUDGETS**

Emergency Management (a/c 4290)

The Committee discussed what was required for this account.

Action: A print out is to be provided by Mr. Dilworth Jr.

Selectman Lambert explained he had put the figures into the wrong column and this has now been corrected. He stated the figures are unchanged and that the Town may end up with grant applications which may require matching funds at the year end. He also explained the trailer has not yet been purchased will be more expensive. There followed a discussion regarding the need for justification and backup as well as a list of equipment purchased this year.

Action: Mr. Harte asked Selectman Lambert to request the above information from Chief Schofield.

Ambulance (a/c 4215)

In response to a query from Mr. Harte regarding who would respond to ambulance call out when none is available from Hudson, Selectman Lambert explained how the fees normally work, but stated he did not know the answer to Mr. Harte's question.

Action: Selectman Lambert to obtain the answer to Mr. Harte's query.

There followed a discussion regarding when Emergency Management should be discussed.

Action: Chairman Lemire to add the date for discussion of Emergency Management to the Budget Committee schedule.

Mr. Harte reported that Mr. Dilworth Jr. had provided copies of the MS-5 and had handed these out at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Dilworth Jr. reported that the Town was hoping for a tax rate setting session next week. He also provided a status report on the other MS forms.

In response to Mr. Harte's query on the progress of updating figures and moving encumbered figures, Mr. Dilworth Jr. stated the documentation would be provided to the Budget Committee in two weeks. Mr. Harte clarified the Budget Committee would find it helpful to have these figures before they begin voting.

In response to Mr. Harte's query about the reconciliation of the current budget, Selectman Lambert provided a progress report, stating they have not yet finished closing the books for the year.

In response to a request from Mr. Falzone for clarification of the figures on page 4 of the MS-5, there followed a discussion.

5. SCHOOL DISTRICT BUSINESS

Mr. Miller reported the School Board are progressing with review of the School District budget, and is on target for delivery to the Budget Committee.

6. MEMBER INPUT

In response to a question from Mr. Falzone, Mr. Miller explained that State law requires public Kindergarten for a half day. He went on to say that this will require a portable with two classrooms, plus one teacher and supplies and it will need to connect to the septic. He reported that the State will reimburse the cost of the portable, but the Town will need to fund the teacher and supplies. There followed a discussion regarding the effect of additional classrooms on the septic at GMS, with Mr. Miller reporting that the septic will not be at full capacity.

MOTION: by Mr. Miller

Move to adjourn the meeting

SECOND: Mr. McCue

VOTE: 7-0-0

The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Sandra Maxwell (Recording Secretary)