

1 **Minutes of**

2  
3 **Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting**

4  
5 **Held on December 4, 2008**

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7 The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday December 4, 2008 in the  
8 Media Room at Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

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10 **PRESENT:** B Lemire (Chairman), J Harte (Vice Chairman), P Parker, M  
11 Falzone, , R Peeples, G Lambert (Selectmen's representative), D  
12 Miller  
13 **ABSENT:** B McCue

14  
15 Chairman Lemire called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

16  
17 **1. PUBLIC INPUT**

18 There was no public input.

19  
20 Chairman Lemire stated he wished to defer approval of the minutes until later in the  
21 meeting and would address the School District Budget next.

22  
23 **2. PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

24 Chairman Lemire welcomed Mr. Steve Martin, SAU Business Administrator, and Dr.  
25 Elaine Cutler, SAU Superintendent, thanking them and Mr. Miller for distributing the  
26 budget books and electronic files. He then polled the Committee members and the  
27 approach for the budget presentation was agreed upon.

28  
29 Mr. Martin walked through the Executive Summary for the benefit of the Committee.  
30 He explained they are currently negotiating the LEA contract and therefore those  
31 figures have not been included as yet.

32  
33 Chairman Lemire asked about the litigation by Hudson with the State regarding the  
34 Kindergarten program and Mr. Martin confirmed they are required to include these  
35 figures in the budget.

36  
37 It was explained that Dr. Cutler had requested a level funded budget excluding  
38 salaries, and Mr. Martin spoke about the budget areas which have increased and  
39 decreased. He also stated the School Board had made additional cuts of \$5.4 million.  
40 He then summarized what is included and reported the budget has increased overall  
41 (excluding benefits and salaries) by approximately 4%, and the estimated impact on  
42 the tax rate of the School District budget is 54 cents per \$1,000 (not including the  
43 LEA contract). He also reported they are using a new software package and  
44 explained how this has affected the presentation of the budget. He pointed out the  
45 Food Services budget change of \$22,000 which has an offset in revenue, and also  
46 pointed out changes to the way in which this budget is presented i.e. three sections:

1 budget, detail and salaries. Mr. Martin then walked the Committee through the  
2 Exhibits (page 5) and the percentage increases and changes. He pointed out there will  
3 be a separate warrant article for the teachers' contract. Mr. Martin pointed out that  
4 Property Services and benefits have increased significantly.  
5

6 Chairman Lemire asked about the Evergreen Legislation and how it will impact  
7 teachers. The School representatives explained there would be no impact on the first  
8 three years of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and that step and longevity  
9 increases will be guaranteed going forward after the new contract ends. There  
10 followed a discussion on the Evergreen Legislation.  
11

12 Mr. Martin reported the largest increases are in the 4000 series accounts and almost  
13 all are due to changes at GMS. He stressed the cost of teacher salaries for the non  
14 public programs, i.e. summer camp, is offset by revenues. There followed a  
15 discussion regarding paying teachers for these types of programs and the effects due  
16 to the current law.  
17

18 Exhibit 7 – Mr. Martin spent time explaining the information contained in this.  
19

20 NH retirement – Chairman Lemire clarified that the amount shown is only for current  
21 salaries.  
22

23 It was pointed out it was necessary to hire a paraprofessional for SPED out of the  
24 budget as an IEP student who was previously sent out of District is now back in  
25 District.  
26

27 Mr. Martin explained there are repairs to GMS to be done over the next few years  
28 which are required by the Health Inspector in order for the school to be approved by  
29 the State.  
30

31 It was confirmed for Mr. Peebles that a PSNH rebate was obtained by check.  
32

33 Mr. Martin stated that \$400,000 was spent on school repairs as required by the fire  
34 marshal. He provided detailed information on what repairs had been completed and  
35 which are still outstanding. There was a discussion regarding the fire alarm  
36 improvements required at GMS.  
37

38 It was pointed out the Director of Curriculum is being made a full time position. It  
39 was also pointed out the transportation contract includes fuel costs.  
40

41 Data communications has increased due to a miscalculation last year and additional  
42 bandwidth is required. There was a discussion regarding T1 lines and what the  
43 School District is paying for these. Chairman Lemire clarified for the Committee that  
44 increases only were being discussed.  
45

1 Mr. Martin explained the District has to provide increases where teachers improve  
2 their grade through further education, providing examples. There followed a  
3 discussion in which it was pointed out teachers are required to inform the District  
4 when they are studying, and the contract requires the District make the payment.  
5

6 Dr. Elaine Cutler explained how 6<sup>th</sup> period classes work and the effect of these on the  
7 curriculum and budget. It was confirmed the District had recommended the Board  
8 increase the daily rate for substitute teachers.  
9

10 Mr. Martin walked through the budget guidelines for Exhibit 9 (salary increases),  
11 providing an explanation of salary range increases and providing an example. He  
12 clarified this would be the equivalent of a step plus cost of living increase and is equal  
13 to 4%. He stressed it is not automatic and is essentially a merit increase.  
14

15 Clarification was provided at the request of Mr. Harte as to why worker's  
16 compensation has increased.  
17

18 Chairman Lemire and Mr. Martin discussed how long it might take to provide figures  
19 for 1, 2 and 3% salary increases, as requested of the Town, if the Committee decides  
20 they wish to see this. Mr. Martin confirmed he could provide hard figures in January  
21 or estimated figures if they are required before then. There followed a discussion  
22 regarding the figures and the fact that it is not a standard increase for everyone across  
23 the board.  
24

25 Mr. Martin spoke about an additional receptionist position at LMS. Chairman Lemire  
26 pointed out that new positions should go on a warrant article unless the Committee  
27 and Board agreed otherwise. Dr. Cutler stressed there are no benefits for the position.  
28

29 Dr. Cutler explained why it was necessary to transfer a position to CHS for a  
30 counselor for students at risk. There followed a discussion and Cutler explained for  
31 Chairman Lemire that there would not be a reduction in SPED as a result. Mr. Martin  
32 explained the decrease will appear as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and there followed a  
33 discussion to clarify this.  
34

35 Dr. Cutler agreed to obtain for Selectman Lambert the number of students involved in  
36 SPED and what percentage of the budget SPED is.

37 Mr. Martin explained for Selectman Lambert that they usually wait until the Budget  
38 Committee agrees on the budget before putting the budget documents on the school  
39 web site for the public.  
40

41 Dr. Cutler provided justification for expanded positions. There followed a discussion  
42 regarding federal funding and the benefit to the district of obtaining this, with  
43 clarification being provided that these funds can only augment the District's budget,  
44 and cannot supplant it.  
45

1 There was a discussion regarding the calculation of the additional administration  
2 assistant hours and cutting down on overtime.

3  
4 Dr. Cutler provided an explanation of school approval and how the District will meet  
5 the requirements of the State.

6  
7 Chairman Lemire clarified the process and timing of obtaining answers to queries the  
8 Budget Committee members have relating to the School Budget.

9 He then declared recess at 7:50 p.m., calling the meeting to order again at 7:57 p.m.

10  
11 The meeting continued with a discussion between the members as to whether they  
12 would ask the district to look at salary increase options and they decided to review the  
13 material and make a decision at the next meeting.

14  
15 Selectman Lambert handed out the COLA adjustments which had been requested by  
16 the Committee as well as an update to the Police department budget. He also referred  
17 to a memo from the Board of Selectmen Chairman asking the Budget Committee to  
18 delay action on warrants until the Board can compile these. Chairman Lemire  
19 requested advance warning of when the Board will be ready to put on these on the  
20 Budget Committee agenda.

21  
22 **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

23 **MOTION:** by Mr. Miller

24 *Move to approve the minutes of the Litchfield Budget Committee meeting on*  
25 *November 13, 2008*

26 **SECOND:** Chairman Lemire

27 **VOTE: 4-0-3 (Mr. Miller, Mr. Falzone and Mr. Parker abstained)**

28 The motion carried.

29  
30 **4. TOWN BUDGET VOTING**

31 **Police (a/c 4210)**

32 Selectman Lambert highlighted changes which had been made by the Board of  
33 Selectmen. He stated that overall the budget was down approximately \$2,000.

34  
35 A discussion took place regarding the detail of the changes which had been made to  
36 the Training budget and Selectman Lambert explained the changes were made to  
37 more accurately reflect the training taking place. He also explained that the Seminars  
38 and Conventions line items have been added to the various sub accounts. There  
39 followed a discussion relating to specialized training and whether this could be  
40 deferred due to the current economic situation, or obtained free through the police  
41 standards office. Selectman Lambert explained the money had been added at the  
42 request of the Board of Selectmen due to a recommendation from MRI that the police  
43 staff receive additional training.

44 **MOTION:** by Selectman Lambert

45 *Move to approve a bottom line for account 4210, Police Department of \$1,138,655*  
46 *in the 2009 Operating Budget*

1       **SECOND: Mr. Falzone**

2  
3       Mr. Parker queried line item 20.144 and the reduction in wages for Crime Control,  
4       and Selectman Lambert clarified there would be a reduction in court costs when the  
5       court prosecutor is hired.

6  
7       **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

8       *Move to reduce line item 10.341, Telephone, from \$14,500 to \$13,400*

9       **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

10      Mr. Harte stated there was no information in the backup as to why this item had  
11      increased and this reduction would be level funding the line at the 2008 level.

12      Selectman Lambert explained the reason for the increase made by the Board.

13      **VOTE:** 1-5-1 (Mr. Peeples abstained, Mr. Harte voted for the motion)

14      **The amendment failed.**

15  
16      Mr. Harte requested specific information on the training being budgeted for the Police  
17      Chief in line item 10.811 (Seminars and Conventions) and whether this was a realistic  
18      number. There followed a discussion, with Chairman Lemire stating he was  
19      concerned there was no proposal for specific training with dates provided.

20  
21      **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

22      *Move to reduce line item 10.811, Seminars and Conventions from \$3,500 to \$1,500*

23      **SECOND:** Mr. Parker

24      Mr. Harte stated this would be funding the line at the 2008 amount and he would  
25      leave it up to the Chief as to how he spends the money.

26      **VOTE:** 4-2-1 (Selectman Lambert and Mr. Miller voted against the motion and Mr.  
27      Peeples abstained)

28      **The amendment carried.**

29  
30      There was a discussion regarding the outside prosecutor position and the options  
31      which were considered as well as the problems associated with this.

32  
33      There was also a discussion regarding training and additional amounts added by the  
34      Board of Selectmen to the Crime Control account under Seminars and Conventions.

35  
36      **MOTION:** by Mr. Falzone

37      *Move to reduce line item 20.811, Seminars and Conventions, to zero from \$1,000*

38      **SECOND:** Mr. Harte

39      Mr. Falzone explained he objected to the change due to a lack of backup.

40      **VOTE:** 5-1-1 (Selectman Lambert opposed the motion and Mr. Peeples abstained)

41      **The amendment carried.**

42  
43      **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

44      *Move to reduce line item 20.430, Equipment Maintenance Contract, from \$9,495 to*  
45      *\$8,495*

46      **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

1 Mr. Harte explained he based his amendment on spending so far. Selectman Lambert  
2 stated he was unsure the amount which had been budgeted for this year would cover  
3 the full costs for the year.

4 **VOTE:** 3-3-1 (Selectman Lambert, Mr. Falzone and Mr. Miller opposed the motion  
5 and Mr. Peeples abstained)

6 **The motion failed.**

7 Mr. Peeples explained why he was abstaining from the voting on the Police budget.  
8

9 Chairman Lemire asked about deferring a cruiser purchase in line item 30.760 and  
10 Selectman Lambert explained there is high mileage on some of the cruisers. There  
11 was a discussion about cutting a cruiser from the budget and the options available if  
12 an emergency occurred relating to an existing cruiser.

13  
14 **MOTION:** by Mr. Falzone

15 *Move to reduce line item 30.760, Cruiser Purchases, from \$58,000 to \$29,000*

16 **SECOND:** Mr. Harte

17 **VOTE:** 5-1-1 (Selectman Lambert opposed the motion and Mr. Peeples abstained)

18 **The amendment carried.**

19  
20 **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

21 *Move to reduce line item 30.635, Vehicle Fuel, from \$37,150 to \$30,000*

22 **SECOND:** Mr. Parker

23 Mr. Harte provided justification for his amendment which included a reduction in fuel  
24 costs and current fuel consumption.

25 **VOTE:** 5-1-1 (Mr. Peeples abstained and Selectman Lambert opposed the motion)

26 **The amendment carried.**

27  
28 **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

29 *Move to reduce line item 30.811, Seminars and Conventions, from \$2,500 to zero*

30 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

31 **VOTE:** 5-1-1 (Mr. Peeples abstained and Selectman Lambert opposed the motion)

32 **The amendment carried.**

33  
34 There was a discussion regarding the OHRV grant. Selectman Lambert stated it was  
35 his expectation that they will receive this grant for one more year, clarifying that they  
36 need to spend the money before they can receive the grant. Options were suggested  
37 by Chairman Lemire.

38  
39 **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

40 *Move to reduce line item 80.331, DWI/OHRV Grants from \$5,000 to \$1*

41 **SECOND:** Chairman Lemire

42 There was a discussion regarding what has been spent on grant wages so far this year.

43 **VOTE:** 4-2-1 (Selectman Lambert and Mr. Miller opposed the motion, Mr. Peeples  
44 abstained)

45 **The amendment carried.**

46

1 A new bottom line of \$1,092,006 was confirmed for the Police budget.  
2 **VOTE:** 5-1-1 (Mr. Peeples abstained, and Selectman Lambert opposed the motion)  
3 **The motion carried.**

4  
5 Chairman Lemire discussed changing the start time of the next meeting to 6:00 p.m.,  
6 stating he would confirm this in an e-mail.  
7 Mr. Dilworth Jr. asked about a date for the public hearing and Chairman Lemire stated he  
8 will confirm this but it will probably be January 20<sup>th</sup>.

9 **MOTION:** by Selectman Lambert

10 ***Move to adjourn the meeting***

11 **SECOND:** Mr. Harte

12 **VOTE:** 7-0-0

13 The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

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19 ***Minutes taken by:***

**Sandra Maxwell, Recording Secretary**

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