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3 **Minutes of the**
4 **Litchfield Budget Committee**
5 **Held on October 15, 2009**
6

7 The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2009, at
8 Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.
9

10 **PRESENT:** B Lemire (Chairman), J Harte (Vice Chairman), B Spencer, P Parker, G
11 Lambert (Board of Selectmen Representative), J Guerrette (School Board Representative)
12

13 **ABSENT:** M Falzone, R Peeples
14

15 Mr. Lemire opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
16

17 **1. PUBLIC INPUT**

18 There was no public input.
19

20 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

21 Approval of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting.
22

23 **3. PRESENTATION OF TOWN BUDGETS**

24 **Town Meeting (a/c 4130.30)**

25 Mr. Lambert presented the budget for this account.

26 *Line item 346 (Optech Programming):* He reported the Board of Selectmen had
27 discussed whether the Optech was an annual expense or to be paid at every election
28 as it had only been budgeted for one time, and had discovered it should be paid at
29 each election. It had therefore been necessary to increase the amount in the line.
30

31 *Line item 740 (New Equipment):* Mr. Harte clarified there was no specific
32 equipment, only supplies in this, and Mr. Lambert stated they had recently purchased
33 storage for the voting booths. Mr. Lemire pointed out the Budget Committee has
34 always asked for backup information on new equipment lines.
35

36 *Line item 127 (Voting Booth Set-up):* In response to a query on how often this is
37 used, Mr. Lambert stated they will have to fund this as additional labor for moving as
38 the School District had previously picked up the charge.
39

40 *Line item 551 (Annual Town Report):* In response to a query from Mr. Spencer on
41 what the basis is for the Town Report, Mr. Harte stated he would guess this has
42 increased by 10% to take account of increased costs. Mr. Lambert stated the Town
43 hopes to put this out to bid this year.
44

45 Mr. Lemire requested a backup of the new equipment for next week.

46 **Action: Mr. Lambert**

1 Mr. Guerrette pointed out that most of the items budgeted for last year have gone
2 over budget and there followed a discussion with Mr. Lambert about this.

3
4 **Insurance (a/c 4196)**

5 Mr. Lemire reported the Committee has not yet received the information on this
6 account.

7
8 **Highway Administration (a/c 4311)**

9 The Road Agent, Mr. Jack Pinciario presented his department's budget.

10 *Line item 10-130 (Road Agent Salary):* In response to a query by Mr. Spencer
11 regarding the increase in this line, Mr. Lambert reported the Board of Selectmen had
12 discovered that our Road Agent's salary has not increased in several years and had
13 looked at the Road Agent's salary in other communities. He talked about how the
14 Board had evaluated it to make sure it is in line with other communities. There
15 followed a discussion with Mr. Spencer regarding the responsibilities of the position
16 and what the stipend pays for. Mr. Pinciario explained the laboring part of the job is
17 paid by an hourly rate and the administrative responsibilities are covered by the
18 stipend.

19
20 *Line item 341 (Telephone):* In response to a query from Mr. Lemire, Mr. Pinciario
21 explained there are two cell phones plus two lines. There followed a discussion
22 about whether lines had been consolidated last year and why the cost for telephones
23 was so high for this year. There was also a discussion regarding whether the radio
24 line should be kept, and Mr. Lambert reported there is currently an analysis of all the
25 telephone lines in the town taking place. Mr. Lemire clarified the number for this
26 line could be fluid, and requested more information from Mr. Lambert for the next
27 meeting.

28 **Action: Mr. Lambert**

29
30 *Line item 740 (New Equipment Purchases):* In response to a query from Mr. Lemire
31 regarding backup for this line, Mr. Pinciario stated the amount in the line was to
32 cover a computer for the Road Agent. There followed a discussion for clarification
33 regarding whether a computer had been allocated to the Road Agent last year, and
34 Mr. Raccio provided background information at the request of Mr. Lambert. Mr.
35 Lemire requested that Mr. Lambert investigate to see whether the town could avoid
36 having to purchase an additional computer for the Road Agent and also asked for
37 further information on what items had specifically been budgeted in the line for the
38 next meeting.

39 **Action: Mr. Lambert**

40
41 *Line item 811 (Seminars):* In response to Mr. Harte's query regarding whether Mr.
42 Pinciario planned to attend any seminars, Mr. Pinciario reported he would like to
43 attend one in April 2010 at NH College for \$235, plus one on storm water
44 management for \$125 at UNH.

45

1 *Line item 20-310 (Consulting Engineer):* In response to a query from Mr. Spencer on
2 what has been spent to date, Mr. Pinciario talked about the bills for engineering. He
3 reported he had information on problems relating to Albuquerque which would
4 require work next year, stating he would leave the information for the Budget
5 Committee so that they are aware of these. He then talked about roads which are in
6 need of maintenance and Mr. Lemire stated the Budget Committee supported the
7 upkeep of roads as they are aware of the importance of the town infrastructure.
8

9 **Highways and Streets (a/c 4312)**

10 *Line item 10-575 (Culvert Replacements):* Mr. Pinciario talked about two culverts
11 (Sybil and Mike) which need to be replaced. He pointed out they will also be doing
12 Albuquerque next year but are unsure how this will be funded.
13

14 There followed a discussion between members of the Committee and Mr. Lambert
15 regarding funding options which have been considered by the Board of Selectmen
16 including Highway Block Grant money and FEMA, and the implications of using
17 these. During the discussion Mr. Spencer clarified that the Board of Selectmen
18 intends doing the work without having to go to the voters. Mr. Lambert clarified for
19 Mr. Spencer that the money received next year will into a separate fund and that the
20 Board of Selectmen are keeping their options open regarding how they fund road
21 maintenance. There was further discussion on this.
22

23 In response to a query from Mr. Harte, Mr. Lambert reported the Board of Selectmen
24 is currently investigating how much the town currently has available in Highway
25 Block Grant money and he would hopefully have an answer for the Budget
26 Committee within the next few weeks.
27

28 *Line item 20-125 (Workmen Wages):* Mr. Spencer clarified there has been an
29 increase in the wage rates.
30

31 In response to a query from Mr. Spencer, Mr. Pinciario confirmed they would like to
32 buy a new plow truck and that his rate for driving it was included in the budget.
33

34 *Line item 20-650 (Roadside Mowing):* Mr. Pinciario confirmed this work would be
35 done in house next year and therefore there was no additional cost for this.
36

37 *Line item 20-411 (Propane):* Mr. Harte confirmed this line was for heating the
38 garage. Mr. Spencer pointed out the rate for propane is expected to come down next
39 year. There followed a discussion in which Mr. Lynch explained how they had
40 calculated the cost of gas and a discussion on spending over the last few years.
41

42 *Line item (20-440 (Equipment Rental):* In response to a query from Mr. Harte, Mr.
43 Pinciario explained how he had calculated the cost of this and there followed a
44 discussion with Mr. Spencer regarding the amount of roads to be plowed and the
45 number of routes and how these things had been taken into account.
46

1 *Line item 20-575 (Road Maintenance/Improvements):* There was a discussion
2 regarding removal of Nakomo by the Board of Selectmen and why the money for
3 improvements is in the budget rather than allocated to the Highway Block Grant.
4 Mr. Spencer informed the Committee he will recommend removing this from the
5 Operating Budget, explaining he was concerned about the situation if the Operating
6 Budget failed as this money would not be in the Default Budget. Mr. Lambert stated
7 he would take the Committee's concerns back to the Board. Mr. Spencer provided
8 some historical information, pointing out that in the past large projects had been
9 separate warrant articles, but that over time these started appearing within the
10 Operating Budget. He suggested they should return to how things had been done
11 before and pointed out the Town will have money going forward to fund future
12 projects with the Highway Block Grant.

13
14 *Line item 20-635 (Vehicle Fuel):* In response to a request from Mr. Harte, Mr.
15 Pinciario explained he had included maintenance of the bike path, the additional plow
16 truck and mowing within this figure.

17
18 *Line item 20-572 (Road Sweeping):* In response to a query from Mr. Guerrette, Mr.
19 Pinciario explained this was done once per year and was not put out to bid.

20
21 *Line item 20-631 (Equipment Repair And Maint.):* Mr. Pinciario explained for Mr.
22 Spencer why so much had been expended on this line in 2009, but reported he did
23 not anticipate these additional expenses next year and thought the \$4,000 requested
24 will be sufficient.

25
26 *Line item 20-687 (Gravel):* It was explained this has not yet been ordered for this
27 year and supplies are now low. In response to a query from Mr. Lemire, Mr.
28 Pinciario explained what the gravel has been used for.

29
30 *Line item 30-578 (Catch Basin Replacements):* In response to a query from Mr.
31 Spencer, Mr. Pinciario explained there are a number of catch basins in need of
32 replacement and the cost is approximately \$2,300 each. He reported some were
33 replaced this year and others were repaired.

34
35 *Line item 30-577 (Catch Basin Cleaning):* Mr. Pinciario reported the town is ahead
36 on storm water management.

37
38 *Line item 50-631 (Plow and Spreader Repairs):* It was confirmed for Mr. Spencer
39 the amount in this line would be sufficient.

40
41 *Line item 50-630 (Building Repairs & Maint.):* In response to a query from Mr.
42 Harte, Mr. Pinciario provided an explanation of the problems there are with the
43 garage, stating he has requested a bid for replacement of the garage doors.

44
45
46

1 **Street Lighting (a/c 4316)**

2 Mr. Lambert updated the Committee regarding his conversation with PSNH about
3 changing out the types of lights and there followed a discussion regarding the
4 location of street lights in town and whether they are private or the town pays for
5 them. Mr. Lemire suggested checking these out. Mr. Pinciario reported he would
6 have more information next week regarding whether the town is likely to see any
7 savings as a result of any change. In response to a query from Mr. Parker, Mr.
8 Lambert explained the increase for next year is based on actual spending and they
9 are expecting an increase in electricity costs. He also pointed out this line has been
10 overspent in the last few years.

11
12 **Health (a/c 4411.10)**

13 Mr. Kevin Lynch presented his department's budget.

14 *Line item 125 (Salary – Health Officer):* It was reported that the Board of Selectmen
15 is reviewing the stipend, but Mr. Lambert could not provide any information on this.

16
17 *Line item 356 (Water Analysis/Testing):* Mr. Lynch clarified it is the state which
18 requires this testing, explaining the cost could increase depending upon the weather
19 and whether it is completed by a private company.

20
21 *Line item 811 (Seminars):* Mr. Lynch reported there is a seminar in both Spring and
22 the Fall which he would like to attend.

23
24 **Mosquito District (a/c 4411.20)**

25 Mr. Al Raccio presented the budget for this department. Mr. Lemire stated he had
26 appreciated all the public notices informing residents about the mosquito status in
27 town. Mr. Raccio handed out a copy of his backup material and his presentation to
28 the Board of Selectmen, including a copy of the contract which he reported
29 consumes 92% of the budget. He reported the discovery of EEE had driven the
30 budget back to where it had been in 2008 and that they will focus next year on
31 enhancing their current status and on obtaining money back from the state. Mr.
32 Raccio reported they would need to address deficiencies in emergency management
33 in 2010 if the district is to continue to be compliant and this would be a new item in
34 the budget. Mr. Lemire clarified Mr. Raccio would need to present this to the Board
35 of Selectmen who could re-open the account if they so wished.

36
37 In response to a query from Mr. Harte pertaining to the backup information, Mr.
38 Raccio provided an explanation of how contract items and bills relate to line items in
39 the budget.

40
41 *Line item 374 (Specimen Testing & Report):* In response to a query from Mr. Harte,
42 Mr. Raccio provided an explanation of mapping and dipping tests and how the
43 contract price is reduced over the long term.

44

1 There followed a discussion with Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Lemire clarified with Mr.
2 Raccio that the contract is a fixed price and does not vary according to the amount of
3 spraying required.

4
5 *Line item 550 (Printing):* Mr. Raccio confirmed for Mr. Harte that they would re-
6 utilize all the signs made this year which they recover. He also pointed out they
7 would have overspent the budget this year had they not received donations.

8
9 *Line item 560 (Dues & Subscriptions):* It was confirmed this is a new line item.

10
11 *Line item 625 (Postage & Envelopes):* Mr. Raccio reported there are a number of
12 documents which must be filed with the state and these sent by certified and
13 registered mail. He pointed out there should be a journal entry this year to transfer
14 this and the Copier Charges to the Town Hall.

15
16 *Line item 693 (Minor Tools And Supplies):* Mr. Raccio explained they would use the
17 money in this line for leggings for the Committee to provide them with appropriate
18 outfits when they are in the field, and that the Health Department oversee and
19 witness testing as well as conducting surveys.

20
21 *Line item 433 (Internet/Computer):* In response to a query from Mr. Spencer, Mr.
22 Raccio reported this was for a laptop for tracking dip testing and to generate reports.
23 He stated they also have recording software to record meeting minutes as secretarial
24 services has been cut by the Board of Selectmen, as well as a program which allows
25 them to cut photos into reports.

26
27 Mr. Raccio provided additional information on changes made to this account by the
28 Board of Selectmen. There was further discussion regarding how they intended to
29 streamline the process for producing the minutes.

30
31 **4. VOTING ON TOWN BUDGETS**

32 **Cable Committee (a/c 4589)**

33 **MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

34 ***Move to set a bottom line of \$21,022 for account 4589, Cable Committee in the***
35 ***2010 Operating Budget***

36 **SECOND:** Mr. Harte

37
38 **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

39 ***Move to reduce line 631, Equipment Repairs and Maintenance to \$750***

40 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

41 ***Discussion:***

42 Mr. Harte explained he had based his reduction on the fact that new equipment is
43 being purchased this year to replace DVD players. Mr. Spencer also pointed out
44 they could use money from line 630 if they run into difficulty.

45 **VOTE:** 5-1-0 (Mr. Lambert voted against the motion)

46 **The motion carried**

1 **VOTE on a new bottom line of \$20,072: 5-1-0** (Mr. Lambert voted against the
2 motion)

3 **The motion carried**

4
5 **Conservation (a/c 4611)**

6 **MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

7 *Move to set a bottom line of \$3,161 for account 4611, Conservation in the 2010*
8 *Operating Budget*

9 **SECOND:** Mr. Parker

10
11 **Discussion:**

12 Mr. Harte explained for Mr. Spencer that the wanted to reserve the right to bring the
13 consultant in again next year and Mr. Lambert provided further clarification.

14
15 **VOTE:** 6-0-0

16 **The motion carried unanimously.**

17
18 **Planning Board (a/c 4191.10)**

19 **MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

20 *Move to set a bottom line of \$66,913 for account 4191.10, Planning Board in the*
21 *2010 Operating Budget*

22 **SECOND:** Mr. Harte

23
24 **Discussion:**

25 Mr. Harte provided clarification for Mr. Spencer regarding the aerial photography
26 under special projects. It was confirmed that nothing had been spent on recording
27 fees in the last two years.

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

30 *Move to reduce line item 329, Recording Fees to \$50*

31 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

32 **VOTE:** 5-1-0 (Mr. Lambert voted against the motion)

33 **The motion carried.**

34
35 **MOTION:** by Mr. Harte

36 *Move to reduce line item 631, Equipment Repair & Maintenance to \$75*

37 **SECOND:** Mr. Parker

38
39 **Discussion:**

40 Mr. Lambert pointed out that representation had been made by the department that
41 additional maintenance of equipment would be necessary in 2010.

42
43 **VOTE:** 4-2-0 (Messrs. Lambert and Spencer voted against the motion)

44 **The motion carried.**

45
46

1 **VOTE on a new bottom line of \$66,688: 5-1-0** (Mr. Lambert voted against the
2 motion)

3 **The motion carried.**

4
5 **5. MEMBER INPUT**

6 Mr. Guerrette reported he had spoken to the Fire Chief about the \$9,000 in the
7 Recreation account for voice activation at Town Hall and this had prompted him to
8 ask whether there is any testing done of the voice activation system within town
9 buildings. Mr. Lemire stated this would usually be in either the General Government
10 or Fire Department accounts, and agreed the Committee should ask for clarification
11 when the Fire Chief came before them to present his budget. Mr. Spencer explained
12 if Mr. Guerrette wanted to change something within the Recreation account, he
13 should make a motion to re-open the account and Mr. Guerrette stated he would wait
14 until he had all the facts before making any changes.

15
16 Mr. Guerrette handed out Mr. Martin's report. He pointed out the Committee could
17 begin to see the drill down of transfers within the report, but that occasionally it was
18 not transparent as it can encompass more than one item. He stated he will request
19 whether it is possible to obtain clarification on those items. He clarified that
20 something shown as a budget amendment equals an encumbrance.

21
22 Mr. Spencer clarified he is still awaiting the year end figures and there was a
23 discussion about the report with questions asked by the Committee and answered by
24 Mr. Guerrette.

25
26 Mr. Lemire requested the enrolment numbers for next week.

27 ***Action: Mr. Guerrette***

28
29 Mr. Guerrette reported the school principals will accompany the school
30 representatives as resources when the school budget is presented, and that the School
31 Board has met the Budget Committee's request to issue the budget by function.

32
33 In response to a query from Mr. Parker for an estimate on the amount of the COLA
34 increase, Mr. Guerrette stated the administrative staff has been asked to calculate this
35 at a default level of zero. Mr. Lambert confirmed the Board of Selectmen has voted
36 for a COLA increase of 3% for the town side. There followed a discussion regarding
37 why COLA is not on a separate warrant article.

38
39 • **Upcoming meetings**

40 October 22, 2009

41 October 29, 2009

42
43 **MOTION:** Mr. Harte

44 ***Move to adjourn***

45 **SECOND:** Mr. Parker

46 **VOTE:** 6-0-0

1 **The motion carried unanimously.**

2 There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:21
3 p.m.

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7 **Minutes by:** *Mrs. Sandra Maxwell (Recording Secretary)*

8 **Date approved:** *November 12, 2009*

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