

**Minutes of the  
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting**

**Held on December 17, 2009**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, December 17, 2009, at Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

**PRESENT:** B Lemire (Chairman), J Harte (Vice Chairman), B Spencer, R Peeples, M Falzone, P Parker, G Lambert (Board of Selectmen Representative), J Guerrette (School Board Representative)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dr. E. Cutler, S Martin

Mr. Lemire called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**1. PUBLIC INPUT**

Mr. Guerrette, 11 Perry Court, spoke as a member of the public, stating he wished to discuss the CHS track. He talked about the previous warrant for the track which had failed, stating the School District should therefore go back to the tax payers before spending anything on the track. He stated it was his belief there should be a warrant article for the track repair.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes available for approval.

**3. SCHOOL BUDGET PRESENTATION**

**a) Warrant Articles**

Mr. Guerrette reported the School Board has not yet finalized these, but stated the first article would be for the budget, and the second for the collective bargaining agreement. He reported the Board had voted to remove \$80,000 for the track repair and instead will ask for \$10,000 for a geothermal study for the school site (ground water study) which they may include as a warrant article. Mr. Martin confirmed for Mr. Spencer they will still have to do a temporary fix for the flooring issue and explained it would potentially be two years before anything done can be done. Mr. Guerrette stated he would recommend doing the minimum to the flooring.

Mr. Martin handed out the default budget figures which have been approved by the School Board.

**4. VOTING**

**a) CHS**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Guerrette

*Move to set a bottom line for the 2011 CHS Operating Budget of \$5,566,503.95*

**SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

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**MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

*Move to amend account 650, Software, setting it at zero*

**SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

**VOTE:** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

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**MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

*Move to amend account 650, Software, setting it to zero*

**SECOND:** Mr. Peeples (for discussion)

Mr. Lambert stated he had researched this and it was his opinion the upgrades were not required. He pointed to open source software like Audacity, stating he felt there were better products which are free. Dr. Cutler stated this software was for students but would have preferred Mr. Manseau to have responded to this.

**VOTE:** 2-6-0 (Messrs. Lambert and Peeples voted for the motion)

**The motion was defeated.**

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**MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

*Move to amend account 339, Athletic Trainer Services, reducing it to \$32,000*

**SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

Mr. Spencer stated this is a more realistic number as they have only spent 79% of the budgeted amount for the last three years, and this cut funds it at 88%. He also stated it is consistent with what was spent the first year and it was his opinion the District has been over funding this. There followed a discussion on contractual issues and it was confirmed the rate was contractual, but not the hours. Mr. Spencer reiterated they do not use what is usually budgeted.

**VOTE:** 7-1-0 (Mr. Guerrette opposed the motion)

**The motion carried.**

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Responding to a query from Mr. Lambert, Mr. Spencer stated there was no retirement under Administration Salary, account 112 for part time staff and the software would provide a prorated calculation under function 1240. Mr. Martin explained that if it is a teacher who coaches then they must pay retirement on earnings. There followed a discussion between Messrs. Lambert and Martin and Mr. Lambert stated he wanted to make sure there had not been a mistake.

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**MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

*Move to amend account 391, Game Officials, reducing it to \$33,000.50*

**SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

Mr. Spencer explained this funds the game officials at 91% of the budgeted request and is a little more than what was budgeted last year. He stressed this is a variable.

**VOTE:** 7-1-0 (Mr. Guerrette opposed the motion)

**The motion carried.**

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Mr. Lambert stated he thought the SolidWorks software was a one time purchase and there was a discussion about what Mr. Manseau had stated. Mr. Guerrette clarified that they would need to purchase maintenance or they would not get upgrades.

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Mr. Lambert asked for confirmation that there would be no increase in the Honeywell HVAC maintenance, and Mr. Martin clarified he would negotiate or go with someone else next year.

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**MOTION:** by Mr. Guerrette

***Move to remove \$80,000 from account 430, Repairs and Maintenance, under CHS Site Improvements***

**SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

Mr. Guerrette explained this was for the track and was being removed as previously discussed. Responding to Mr. Spencer, Mr. Martin stated they will research the problem and try to have the track repaired by the spring. During the following discussion it was clarified that the repairs will be made in 2010 and they would not therefore budget it for 2011.

**VOTE:** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Guerrette

***Move to add \$10,000 to a new line under budget unit 1031430000, account 330, CHS Architectural and Engineering Professional Services***

**SECOND:** Mr. Harte

Mr. Guerrette stated this is for the geothermal study of the school site as previously discussed.

**VOTE:** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

***VOTE on a new bottom line of \$5,487,857.95 for CHS:*** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Lemire confirmed for Mr. Martin he had forwarded his information on health insurance to the committee. Responding to Mr. Harte's query as to how they under spent healthcare Mr. Martin reported they budgeted at the guaranteed maximum and provided an example of how under spending could occur, pointing out that any

changes in the plan increased the cost and therefore they under spent less than they should have. He explained why he is nervous about the 3% cut made by the Budget Committee.

**VOTE on a new bottom line for the 2011 Litchfield School District Operating Budget of \$19,189,827.32:** 3-4-1 (Messrs. Spencer, Falzone, Peeples and Guerrette opposed the motion, with Mr. Lambert abstaining)

**The motion was defeated.**

Mr. Spencer spoke about the teachers and suggested making a motion to remove one teacher, stating the School District can try to get it back in at the Deliberative Session or on a warrant article. He stated he felt that would be fair as the Committee was split and they should therefore pass it to the voters. He pointed out the Committee also has to have a recommendation going to the Budget Hearing.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

***Move to amend the bottom line for the 2011 Litchfield School District Operating Budget to \$19,127,846,32.***

**SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

Mr. Spencer confirmed this amounted to a reduction of \$61,981, and spoke more on his motion. There followed a discussion in which Mr. Spencer clarified for Mr. Lemire that he was trying to figure a way around this road block, stating there is a lot of contention about the subject of student/teacher ratios. There was further discussion on whether it was appropriate to reduce the bottom line further with the members weighing in on Mr. Spencer's motion.

Dr. Cutler explained the process of holding a teacher's position until they have the children as a compromise, stating the Board has discussed this. She stated she would not fill the position unless the numbers warranted it. There was further input from members of the Committee and a discussion regarding what the likely Fund Balance would be.

**VOTE:** 4-4-0 (Messrs Parker, Lemire, Harte and Guerrette opposed the motion)

**The motion was defeated.**

It was confirmed there would be no Budget Committee recommendation for the School Operating budget.

## **5. OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

Mr. Lemire confirmed the following meetings:

- January 5, 2010
- January 7, 2010
- January 15, 2010 (Budget Hearing)
- February 5, 2010 (School Deliberative Session)

Dr. Cutler stated mediation with the Teachers' Union will begin on January 7, 2010.

Mr. Martin asked whether he should put the Budget Committee figures on the forms for the state, and Mr. Spencer pointed out the School Board could input their own figures if the Budget Committee cannot make a recommendation. There followed further discussion.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Lambert

***Move to amend the bottom line for the 2011 Litchfield School District Operating Budget to \$19,156,743.32***

**SECOND:** Mr. Harte

It was confirmed this represented a reduction of \$33,084.

**VOTE:** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

It was clarified that the Budget Committee would now be able to recommend the School Operating budget at the Budget Hearing.

## **6. OUTSTANDING TOWN MATTERS**

Mr. Lambert stated there were some line item changes within the Town Budget and that warrant articles would be available by January 5, 2010. Mr. Lemire requested all the paperwork should be available for voting on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Responding to Mr. Spencer's query as to how they would come up with a bottom line for the town, Mr. Lemire reported he had requested final figures from Ms. Langille and Mr. Harte would be reconciling these with her. Mr. Lemire thanked the Committee for their efforts and wished them well for the holiday season. There was a discussion regarding how the Committee should approach budget deliberations.

**MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

***Move to adjourn***

**SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

**VOTE:** 8-0-0

**The motion carried unanimously.**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

**Minutes taken by:**

***Sandra Maxwell (Recording Secretary)***

**Date approved:**

***January 14, 2010***