

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD

Mosquito Control District

November 28, 2007

The Board held a meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Present: John Latsha, Chairman
Alfred C. Raccio
Joan McKibben

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7: 04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chairman called the Roll: All were present.

MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. Kevin Lynch, Health Officer, came before the Board to discuss the 2008 Mosquito Control Budget incorporated into the Health Department's budget.

Mr. Latsha talked about the rationale for the Mosquito Control District.

In the Municipal Management's original proposal, the bottom line did not meet the statement numbers. So, the contract is for \$24,500 not \$24,300. The Selectmen had no issue with the contract or with the budget.

Mr. Lynch told the Board that Municipal is applying for the license now. To this Mrs. McKibben said he has no relation at this time with the Town. Mr. Lynch said it is a backup, there is no cost and now we will have a company able to proceed even if the budget goes nowhere.

Mr. Raccio: Unless they enter into a contract with Litchfield, they have no authorization to represent the Town of Litchfield.

Mr. Lynch explained that they can get a license even if through the school district he can get a license it is his license to allow him to come into Town to do spraying.

Mr. Raccio: We have not authorized him so until we instruct and you send him a communications which authorizes him, he cannot sign us up for anything.

Mr. Lynch: He is not signing us up for anything.

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Mr. Raccio: No permit.

Mr. Lynch: He can get a permit for himself though. Mr. Raccio will check with the attorneys.

At the Budget Committee meeting there was a question as to mapping of the catch basins. Mr. Lynch said this is taking existing mapping and remapping to where he will be doing his work. Mr. Raccio: He will be extracting the information from our existing maps and use what he needs to provide us the recommended sources of larvae and where to be treated.

2008 Budget

Chairman Latsha asked Mr. Lynch's opinion of the recommended budget.

Public Notices \$90 - Mr. Lynch said the contract provides for posting in a local newspaper. Mr. Lynch said that if we do pick up one mosquito with equine, the media is going to pick that up faster than we are. The State would also step in and get the word out there. Mr. Raccio said that the Selectmen put money in all the budgets for ads to cover emergency action in this case, or to advertise for a new member. There are many reasons to advertise.

It was asked once the contract is ratified will there still be a commission? Is there a time life on this commission? Mr. Raccio said the life of the warrant according to the State statutes is three (3) years. The Mosquito Control District will continue to advise and a contract will go through competitive bidding. The District will continue until the Town votes to dismantle the commission.

Recording \$700 - Mr. Lynch said at \$43 an hour the Budget Committee thought it was high for recording the minutes. This was discussed. This is for 7 or 8 meetings x 3.5 hours and the \$43 includes attendance at the meetings and transcribing minutes.

Internet computer - \$3,500 (\$1,000 for web service and \$2,500 for a computer). Mr. Lynch said that other communities do testing twice a month or it can do it weekly. He questioned where the computer would be located because he does not have access to Town Hall nor does Mr. Latsha. He feels the computer should come out of the administration's budget. Mr. Raccio explained they are setting up a town server and the mosquito district information won't go to a home computer in the future; it will go to the townoflitchfield.gov and then sent to the addressee and there will be an address for the health officer and the district, town clerk, etc. That computer and software will be the desktop associated with the Mosquito Control District and it may be located in the multi-purpose room. It won't be one person getting the information.

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Talk ensued. It was agreed not to mix the Health Department with the Mosquito Control budget at least for the first year.

Printing \$200 - This is for signs. Mr. Lynch said he uses the same thing the State uses and Municipal can use it too. He had put up laminated signs and he talked to the Superintendent and the coaches were notified. He feels this line item is not needed.

At this time, Mr. Lynch said to let the budget go its course because the Selectmen approved the budget as it is.

Mr. Raccio said the \$200 should remain because we may not be here, Joan my not be here so we need to account for life past.

Dues & Subscriptions \$75 - There may be things to subscribe to.

Office supplies \$200

Film and Supplies - Camera \$425. This is a one time cost to purchase a camera. Mr. Lynch said he feels it is not necessary. "Who will follow this guy around and in talking with other communities these people go out at different times and it is not necessary for us to track him. That information he gathers will be provided so to have somebody go out and track it...that camera will stay in the office. It is already being done by request. I probably will be going out to sensitive areas. We have secretive spots in Town".

Mr. Raccio said he plans on joining this man and with regards to sensitive areas not to catalogue from the district or municipal to properly catalogue the habitats and conditions would be irresponsible. So, he feels it will more than get its utilization that coupled with the computer and the database to archive it.

Mr. Lynch: They are going to be doing what we request and I will ask for pictures and then back it up.

Mr. Raccio: We are charged to be the responsible parties; to make the recommendation and the Selectmen are charged with the responsibility to make sure the Town is protected and documented getting the evidence.

Postage \$50

Copies \$25

Minor Tools and Supplies \$250. This is for clothing, boots, nets, sample jars, etc. Mr. Latsha asked about being covered if someone breaks a leg on a field trip. Mr. Raccio said he and members are covered under the Town's umbrella while doing business on behalf

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of the Town. Municipal has their own insurance and they would provide the Town a copy of their insurance. Mr. Lynch said the members would not be conducting test. Mr. Raccio: We might. Mr. Latsha said the Health Officer usually goes out with them. Mr. Lynch said they go out to the edge of the swamp not in the middle of it so he feels waders and boots are not needed.

Mileage and Tolls \$200 - Mr. Latsha asked if the Board would get involved with additional funding. Mr. Raccio said this Committee has no fiscal authorization; it is the Board of Selectmen.

Talk ensued regarding spraying in other communities. Mr. Lynch feels that spraying is a last resort but he asked why there is no money for aerial spraying in the budget. "If we get a hit that we may need to spray, what would the cost be associated with that? Will the Town be able to pick up the cost from contingency? They are saying \$800 to \$2,000".

Mr. Raccio: We did discuss that. There are three funding mechanisms: Homeland defense, State, and then County under emergency management and then there is the Town. We can take it from the bottom line or contingency.

Back to Municipal obtaining a license for Litchfield, Mr. Raccio said he will not authorize it. Mr. Lynch feels it is a good idea because it takes three months to obtain a license so he should be authorized to get the license. Mr. Raccio will discuss it with the Selectmen.

Talk about the budget process and a default budget. It was said if there is a default budget, the budget is dead. It would come back the following year.

Issues

At this time Mr. Raccio reviewed questions emailed from Mr. Latsha. Mr. Raccio said it is a list of issues that he asked the Chairman to present for discussion.

Why does the Health Officer feel that the 20 series should be within his series budget with the exception of the proposal? Mr. Raccio: My reply was ask him and he has given us several reasons.

Why do we want to keep our budget separate of the Health Officer's budget? Mr. Raccio: Did you read my rationale; this will allow the Town to accurately track accountability, the cost associated with the Mosquito Control District. This will be our first operating year and it is imperative that we understand what cost are associated between the two major groupings now...the structure will allow for concise accounting.

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How do the members of the Mosquito Control District feel about putting our budget in with the Health Officer's budget? Mr. Raccio: I had mixed feelings. The Health Department is a part-time office with limited resources, it is Mr. Lynch, that is it. I am contemplating removing the Mosquito Control funding from the Health Department's line item. This is larger than anything the Health Department has had to handle for the town recently.

If the present budget goes to the Budget Committee again in its present form, will they cut everything?

Mr. Raccio: Ask them and ask yourself have you ever seen an instance where the Budget Committee zeroed an entire request without justification. It is the Budget Committee's charter to assess value in their estimation for the most part. If the Budget Committee feels that budgets are inflated, they will deflate them. Correspondently, if they feel the budget is under funded, they will inflate them. They assume the responsibility of their actions.

Will we risk additional problems with the Budget Committee if we disregard their authority and can they put this on a warrant article?

Mr. Raccio: I did not understand your question. This infers that the Mosquito Control has been disrespectful to the Budget Committee. I do not believe this to be the issue. There has only been one meeting which I am unaware of between the Budget Committee and the Mosquito Control District along with the Health Officer. If there was conduct unbecoming a Chairperson or Health Officer that needed to be brought before the Board Selectmen for disciplinary consideration. Your second part...as citizens of the town anyone individual of the Budget Committee may initiate a warrant article on his or her own. Typically the Budget Committee recommends such actions.

Mr. Lynch: Disrespectful to the Budget Committee, I do not think that was implied at all. I think Brent handled the meeting well...and this is what set it off when Ray said it was my budget and who was going to speak...

Mr. Raccio: No one has demonstrated disregard for their authority.

Mr. Latsha said that might have been a bad choice of words.

Have we obtained any legal advice from the town attorney that the district can have its own separate budget?

Mr. Raccio: We are looking into it. There is no statute that says it falls under the health department and there is no directive from the Board of Selectmen. I talked to town counsel and we may establish the district as a department head accountable to the Board of Selectmen for the 20 series. From the Budget Committee's view, the budget belongs to

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the Selectmen. We do not get involved once the Mosquito District makes the recommendation. That is all we do. At the moment, it is the Health budget and Kevin would execute these line items without us. That is the charter. The question about setting up a commission, a committee and it would be staffed other than us.

Is the Mosquito Control District willing to make additional cuts to the budget?

Mr. Raccio: I am not willing to make any additional cuts. We voted a budget. The question should be has the mosquito reconsidered their budget. Now that presents a problem even if we voted back up and assumed we vote and the vote is 2 in favor and 1 not now you would that back to the Board of Selectmen and they may or may not revisit the budget. My personal feeling is there could be a possibility the Board would reconsider but it is low because it was unanimous vote to accept it.

Mr. Lynch said he will say how he feels at the Budget Committee meeting and he is not sure that he is in favor of the whole line item for the computer; he sees the need but questions if it should be in this budget.

Is the Mosquito Control District isolating the Health Officer by not working with him and his years of experience?

Mr. Raccio: I do not understand the question. The Health Officer has been invited to every meeting and the Mosquito District has not interfered with his budget at all. The Health Officer has admitted that the town to which he serves full time has no mosquito control district therefore he would have limited experience in dealing with mosquito issues. This lack of qualification regarding mosquito control district funding is one of the reasons it is imperative that the Town provides the most accurate account of these expenditures...and over the years rolled into something more familiar. The question implied that the members were not willing to work with the Health Officer's years of experience - that is quite the opposite. I respect the years of experience of the Health Officer that Kevin represents; however, like all of us are new to the mosquito control district rules and regulations.

Mr. Lynch: Those questions are not necessary to be answered.

Mr. Raccio: These are questions from the Chairman.

Mr. Lynch: I got the same questions; being ill at the wrong time created a big lapse and then email going back and forth. I am not a fan of email. No, you did not exclude me. I was trying to get Mr. Morrison's stuff going. I did not want to talk about the budget at that time. We all have good days, bad days. To be honest with you, I felt as an outsider the first time I came here.

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Will the Budget Committee stand up at Deliberative Session and say that, as a Board, they do not recommend this budget only the Selectmen?

Mr. Raccio responded the Committee's reflection reiterates what has been printed in the Town report and the ballot as to whether or not it is recommended a particular warrant article or budget as well as the Selectmen's recommendations as printed as to which position regarding the budget and more articles. It is a good thing to keep in mind not only can the Budget Committee stand up as individuals and speak their mind and change up or down and change any line item but anyone can that is a citizen of the Town. You asked specifically if the Budget Committee the only way they do that is if they say that tomorrow night. When they vote, it will go on the ballot.

Mr. Lynch said that regarding the computers, there is some merit to the big picture; to bring us into the 20th century but to say whether that computer should be dedicated accessibility is an issue. Mr. Raccio: You will have remote access. Mr. Lynch thanked the Board for clarifying the budget because he was concerned because it is in his budget. He said he has spoken with other towns regarding mosquito control, spraying, etc. Talk went on as to the budget process and going before the Budget Committee tomorrow night.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Raccio discussed the vote on the proposed budget submitted for 2008 Health Department and whether the Board wants to vote to reconsider or vote to take into consideration his (Lynch) inputs. Mr. Lynch said that is not a proposal; he has just given a copy to the Chairman but he did not officially present it. Mr. Lynch: What we did tonight was to discuss the whole picture; it is a moot issue and does not need a vote.

Mr. Raccio: The information presented by the Health Officer in consideration of the budget issue I would like to see this voted on. Have we mitigated the issues and have an understanding at the Mosquito Control District level that the budget as presented to the Board of Selectmen is what this Committee is going forward with. Either we vote the budget we presented or we vote to reconsider the budget presented and in that fashion we do not site any one item. We vote to revisit the budget issue but I do think it is imperative that before this Committee goes before the Budget Committee that there is a unanimous vote either we stand behind what we put in for or there is issue with what we put forward...

Talk went on about comments by the Budget Committee.

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Mr. Lynch: There is no change, it has already been voted on and to leave it. My point was to discuss it and get the rationale. The Selectmen had voted.

Mr. Raccio said the motion is just to reaffirm the October 25th vote of the Board.

Mr. Raccio **MOTIONED** to understand: Is this Board in favor of the October 25th budget as moved to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Latsha seconded. The Board stands behind the budget approved. Motion carried 3-0-0.

MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT

Mrs. McKibben said she did speak with Mr. Morrison and he answered a few of her questions. The response time from him was very impressive.

Mr. Lynch said he wants to get involved from the beginning especially with the sensitive areas and procedures.

2008 DISTRICT MEETINGS

Mr. Latsha will draft the 2008 meeting sessions. Mr. Raccio is assuming there will be eight meetings in 2008. It was agreed that Thursday seems to be a good day to meet.

There being no further business, Mr. Raccio **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Latsha seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Lorraine Dogopoulos
Recording Secretary