

Town of Litchfield

Selectmen's Meeting

October 17, 2011

Members present: Steve Perry, Chairman (arriving after start of meeting – 6:10)
John R. Brunelle, Vice Chairman
Frank A. Byron
George A. Lambert (arriving after start of meeting – 6:20)
Brent T. Lemire
Also present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator

5:00 p.m. Review of Paperwork and Communications

6:00 p.m. Call to Order

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of items for consent

1. Wage adjustment – Length of service
2. Minutes September 26, 2011
3. Minutes October 3, 2011

Approval of Consent Items

Selectman F. Byron motioned to approve the items for consent. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-0.

Request for items – Other Business

Selectman F. Byron would like to discuss the services of Mr. John Brunelle, working on Town's computer system

Public Input

None

Review of Process for appointing Fire Chief Draft Job Description

The Board (Mr. Brunelle, Mr. Lemire and Mr. Hoch) have worked together to set up a draft job description. This draft outlines the essential duties, the responsibilities to oversee Fire and EMS operations, the position will work under the general guidance and direction of the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator. The draft also outlines some desired minimum qualifications: looking for

experience in prior EMS work, certifications within the fire service and also notes an acceptable equivalence of education and experience. The notable thing under the special requirements is that it is preferred that the selected candidate will be available for full service duty within 30 days of notification of hire and the candidate must live within 30 minutes driving time under normal safe driving conditions upon completion of the probationary period. The position will be considered part time scheduled up to 32 hour per week. Selectman F. Byron would like to clearly spell out on the job description that the Fire Chief has to work very closely and cooperatively with the Police Chief.

6:10 Selectman S. Perry is now present.

Selectman F. Byron also noted that on the last page which talks about compensation. This position is considered part time scheduled for 32 hours per week and the salary range will be discussed. Selectman F. Byron stated that there is a difference for hiring someone for 32 hours versus appointing someone into a role similar to what it is today with a stipend as well as some level of consideration and believes the Board of Selectmen need to look at in terms of pay for hours. He noted that the voter approval was about appointing and there was no vote about changing the parameters of the position.

6:20 Selectman G. Lambert is now present.

Selectman F. Byron stated that right now you are proposing for the position to be a 32 hour a week position which was not the intent of the voters for the current Chief. Selectman Lambert stated that there weren't any hours before because they were elected and being in an elected position you couldn't give them any hours. The BOS has the responsibility and authority to assign work hours once they are given the authority to appoint someone. Selectman J. Brunelle stated that it says scheduled at up to 32 hours per week; the intent is for a part time position and 32 hours is the maximum they could work. Administrator Hoch stated that looking back at last year in terms of average hours the position was about 21 hours per week that was being covered under the existing appropriation. Selectman J. Brunelle question what do we as a Board want to do. Do we want to go forward with a 32 hour part time Fire Chief which would have been the intent? The budget that is being presented tonight is based on 32 hours. Selectman F. Byron stated that we have to make sure that whatever we do we do with the consent of the voters. Selectman Lambert stated that the voters left it to the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Perry stated that he thinks it should be 22 to 24 hours. Administrator Hoch stated that we could target 24 hours. Administrator Hoch changed the job description to read 24 hours per week.

Process: The Board reviews and approves the job description, Budget estimate is for 24 hours per week for 43 week and the rate that it was based on was \$25.94 which is the current rate for the position.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to the Board of Selectmen to accept the job description as amended. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1.

Board Representatives and Town Administrator will meet with members of the department to discuss process, get input from Fire Department member's preferences for qualities, experience and approach for Fire Chief.

Advertisement finalized placed in professional electronic listings and consider one run in the Sundays news.

Application deadline: Our initial conversations had an application deadline in mid-January. Applications sent to TA's office and he would compile and send the package of materials.

Selectman G. Lambert temporarily left the meeting.

One thought was to get an independent panel of three or four experienced Fire Chiefs in the State to look through the pile of applicants and recommend back their top five so the Board has a context. Board meets to review all applications received, recommendations from Chief's panel.

Selectman G. Lambert is back in meeting.

Then the Board would review all the applications and come up with your preferred list: An interview panel of five or six members of the Fire Department including Officers and Fire Fighters to have an interview. The Administrator's suggestion is to have the interested department members advise him so that he may put together a recommended panel that the Board can approve. Possibly a Department Head, Town Administrator panel considering getting input from the staff who need to be able to work with the Chief on a regular basis and then finally the Selectman as a panel. The panels would meet and debrief with the Board at the end of the day and the Board would then identify who the first choice candidate is and determine who would come in for a second interview. Selectman F. Byron suggested that in making a decision in who we feel should be Chief that the people who are going to be in the service taking the orders of the Chief should be able to have some input. Selectman S. Perry stated that if we had three Officers that we could all agree on who could sit in on the interviews with the Board of Selectmen and take their feedback at the end of the process. It was suggested by the Board that the members of the Fire Department select three people as delegates to help in the interview process. Administrator Hoch revised to say that candidates go for interview with panel of Board of Selectmen with a note that the Fire Department picks three members to participate as observers and provide feedback to the Board of Selectmen after interviewing process. Administrator Hoch suggested holding off on the department heads as part of the process and work on it as we get closer. In regards to the timing on the application deadline, Mr. Byron suggested that when the Board has identified who ever this individual is, probably around the end of January early February so there is ample time if the existing Chief is not re-appointed and the New Chief has time to talk to the former Chief and existing fire fighters. In his opinion, we need to move the schedule up to be the end of January beginning of February. It was decided between the Board of Selectman and the Town Administrator that the deadline for all applications would be Thursday, December 15th. The Department members will review with the Board of Selectman and the Town Administrator. The Interview process will start on the 21st of January. Advertising should be sent out before Thanksgiving and run in the newspaper two weeks before the applications are due.

Public Input

No citizens present

Budgets

Conservation 4611-20

The current year budget is \$2,166.00 and the proposed budget for 2012 is \$3,191.00, an increase of \$1,025.00.

Property Management requesting an additional \$1,000.00 for cutting at Moore's Falls. An additional \$25.00 was requested for the Fishing Derby, matching state fish purchase and prizes (replenish prizes, also 30th anniversary). Selectman S. Perry motioned to the Board of Selectman to reduce line 330, Property management from \$1,750.00 to \$1,000.00. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0. The new bottom line is \$2,441.00. Selectman S. Perry motioned to move the bottom line of \$2,441.00 for Budget 4611-20 Conservation Commission to the Budget Committee. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Recreation

Parks – Administration & Programs 4520.10

This budget reflects an increase from \$5,801.00 this year to \$10,630.00 for next year.

Reallocation of some of the monies that had been in other parts of this budget for groundskeeping and custodian and some additional funds for a part time recreation director anticipated at 260 hours over a course of the year which is 5 hours a week to handle scheduling and paper work. A total cost of \$4,420.00. The Board of Selectmen asked the present members of the Recreation Commission (John Bryant and Jason Allen) to discuss the Director position they are looking for. Mr. Bryant discussed that they are looking for a person to run the recreation department, someone to answer all questions and schedule meetings, etc. Right now it is done by volunteers who hold full time jobs and just do not have the time. Mr. Allen stated that along with scheduling the fields and hall is a part time job in its self along with communicating with people in town, this person would be a point of contact for this stuff, Also, watching over maintenance personnel. Right now it is all done by members of the Rec. Commission. What we are really looking for is an administrator. The hours have been kept low because it will take someone at least a year to figure out how many hours they need. Administrator Hoch explained that there is about \$1,500.00 that was reallocated because the groundskeeper line went in the .20 budget, \$2,400 went out and \$885.00 went into the custodian. So in round numbers \$1,500 was taking out of their existing part time positions to put into this part time position. So you are looking at a net increase of about \$3,000.00 for some additional part time hours.

Notices and ads increased to \$900.00, the main reason is for advertising, RFP's for landscaping and HVAC.

The telephone line increased based on having 2 lines of service at \$30.00 a month.

Minute taking services decreased to \$1,100.00 (\$400.00 decrease)

Dues and Subscriptions increased from \$50.00 to \$60.00. (\$10 increase)

Office supplies and copier charges lines have been combined to the office supply line with an overall decrease from those two lines of \$175.00 down to \$100.00. (\$75.00 decrease)

Program expenses unchanged at \$3,000.00.

Mileage reflects the increase in the mileage rate. \$300.00 to \$330.00. (\$30.00 increase)

Selectman G. Lambert motioned to remove \$4,420.00 (Rec. Director) for a bottom line of \$6,210.00.

Selectman F. Byron seconded the motion. Selectman F. Byron motioned to amend the motion to send the position of Recreation Director to a Warrant article. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The amendment carries 4-1-0. The amended main motion for a bottom line of \$6,210.00 carries 4-1-0.

Parks – Maintenance of Parks 4520.20

The grounds keeper line has \$2,400.00 taken out and \$885.00 of it moved over to the custodian line.

Electricity – there is a stack of bills that come through, so rather than flagging bills we put all of the electricity in the facilities account.

Chemical toilet rental remains unchanged at \$1,600.00.

Equipment repair and maintenance increased from \$100.00 to \$600.00 covering things such as fuel for pressure washer and snow blower, well pump repairs, gates and locks and graffiti cleaning. Our experience has been to date \$435.00.

The Field mowing line has been included in the Field maintenance line between these two it is a \$32,000.00 expense. The \$10,000.00 increase in these lines is for the new fields that will need to be cared for this year.

Minor tools and supplies for replacement of snow shovels, ice melt, rakes, etc. has increased from \$100.00 to \$200.00.

Capital Outlay increased from \$2,200.00 to \$9,000.00. The items included in this line include tennis court resurfacing at \$6,500.00, flag poles \$900.00, playground inspection and upgrades for the balance of that.

Equipment purchases an increase of \$4,700.00. The proposed main item for purchase area two portable light towers for pole so that we can use fields at dusk and early evening. Selectman Lemire questioned why has there been no capital outlay expense so far? Mr. Allen explained that it is because \$2,200.00 that is there now has been given to Baseball to use to replace back stops at Jeff Lane. They are going to rebuild their back stops and they have to November 1st to come back to the Rec. Commission with a plan of what they are going to do at Jeff Lane. They have already done some volunteer work over there doing the infield. Selectman Byron asked about the light towers for the fields which are portable and what field do they plan on using them for. Mr. Allen stated that you can use them at any field because they are portable. Some of the programs that are run off season, we can run these programs and it also gives them the opportunity to play potential Friday or Saturday night games to help extend the use of the Fields, especially in the Fall and Spring season. They can also be used as portable generators which will save us money because we won't need to run power for some events that we have in Town and those fields right now we run power out there. The Town may also use them for other events.

Administrator Hoch temporarily left the meeting.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to the Board to approve and bring to the Budget Committee account 4520.20 Parks – Maintenance of Parks the bottom line of \$58,400.00. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Administrator Hoch is back in meeting.

Maintenance of Rec Facilities 4520.60:

Custodian there is \$885.00 that has been shifted out of the grounds keeping line.

Electricity again this combines all of the facilities into one line.

Propane increased to \$11,000.00.

Water charges decreased from \$1,400.00 to \$1,000.00 based on what our experience has been.

Security monitoring system remains unchanged.

Cable/Internet there is a slight increase based on the monthly charge.

Trash container \$280.00 a month. This is an increase of \$280.00.

Building Repairs and Maintenance, \$18,000.00 for that line is what the Commission has requested. The main thing is HVAC replacement at Talent Hall. The commission has also noted that they are concerned with the existing system that if there was not a change or replacement to HVAC that

\$2,000.00 should be added to the propane line. If there is a decision to revisit the HVAC system, their estimate is \$15,000.00 of that budget line is allocated for that. Know that some of that money really needs to be considered for the propane line. The main thought on the HVAC system is wanting to be able to provide air-conditioning to allow summer use of Talent Hall which is not possible now. The secondary interest is finding ways to make the winter heating system more efficient than it is currently. The \$18,000.00 would include \$15,000.00 for the HVAC improvements and \$3,000.00 for routine repairs and maintenance.

Custodial maintenance supplies a decrease of \$200.00 from \$600.00 to \$400.00.

Septic Tank cleaning is scheduled for every other year so that was scheduled in 2011 so it didn't come out of \$2012.

Minor Tools and Supplies have been rolled up into the custodial maintenance supplies so the net decrease between both of those lines is \$320.00.

Equipment Purchases \$7,000.00. Items here include score board controller for donated score board, basketball backboards, electronic door wire, movie projector and screen to be able to start having some movie nights.

Furniture and Fixture purchases remain unchanged at \$3,000.00.

The Bottom line is \$53,784.00.

Selectman J. Brunelle motioned to pass 4520.60 Maintenance of Rec Facilities for the bottom line of \$53,784.00 to the Budget Committee. Selectman F. Byron seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Selectman J. Brunelle temporarily left the meeting.

Mosquito Control District 4411.20

Mosquito Control District remains unchanged at \$27,310.00, continuing for the contract services.

Selectman S. Perry motioned to move the bottom line of \$27,310.00 for line 4411.20 Mosquito District to the Budget Committee. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Ambulance 4215.10

The bottom line increased to \$47,000.00 and increase of \$9,000.00. Administrator Hoch has been working with the Town of Hudson to get a contract renewal back. The base line approach of our quarterly share is going to be fairly similar. The thing that we are dealing with now is our share of unpaid ambulance bills that are returned to the Town. We are billing out what we can and are getting some of that money back. Right now we owe \$9,000.00 in unpaid bills.

Selectman J. Brunelle is back in meeting.

Selectman S. Perry motioned to reduce line 800 for the ambulance bad debt to \$5,000.00. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move the bottom line of \$43,000.00. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

8:15 pm. Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board to recess the meeting for 5 minutes. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0. The meeting will be back at 8:20.

8:20 pm. Selectmen's Meeting back in session

Emergency Management 4290.10

Emergency Management a bottom line decrease of \$1,300.00, for a Bottom line of \$8,744.00. The Emergency planning line left \$500.00 there. The telephone and data line \$1,044.00, Comcast at \$87/month (previously charged to emergency planning line).

Emergency Hazmat district increased to \$6,200.00. Emergency Equipment Purchase line is down from \$5,000.00 to \$1,000.00. Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move the bottom line for account 4290.10 Emergency Management for an amount of \$8,744.00. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Cemeteries 4195

This year's budget is \$8,195.00 and the proposed budget is for \$8,803.00 for an increase of \$608.00. Water service for Pinecrest has been broken out; this is not a new service, it has been charged to the groundskeeping line previously and runs about \$30.00 a month.

Office supplies we took all three at \$100.00.

Postage combined all three for \$25.00 for notices that may be required.

Old Church Monument repair, project happened that should be happening with this year's funds.

Monument repair as needed for Hillcrest remains unchanged.

Grounds keeping, 12 cuts at \$165.00 a cut, \$500.00 for season cleanup, tree trimming \$2,980.00.

Old Church Groundskeeping, mowing 12 cuts at \$45.00, and brush trimming \$250.00 for a net decrease of \$315.00.

Hillcrest Cemetery Grounds keeping, mowing, 12 cuts at \$145.00 plus \$500.00 for season cleanup and tree trimming which takes this line to \$2,740.00.

Minor tools and supplies remain unchanged at \$25.00.

Pinecrest Cemetery fence repair remain unchanged.

Tolls and mileage for trustee seminar – Concord (combines all three) at \$25.00.

Selectman S. Perry made a motion to move \$8,803.00 for budget 4195 Cemeteries to the Budget Committee. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Impact Fee recommendation to Planning Board

Selectman F. Byron temporarily removed himself from Selectman's role due to a potential conflict of interest involving a project on which he is working.

The Planning Board is considering suspending collection of at least one fee. Mr. Hoch has spoken to one member of the Board of Selectmen who contemplated putting more than one on hiatus for a defined period. Recalling the conversation with Planning Board budget, we also need to sort out getting underlying logic behind some of the impact fees updated over the next year. It is the opinion of counsel, shared in a e-mail copied to the Board, it is the Board of Selectmen's role to accept or reject in whole the recommendation of the Planning Board.

Selectman S. Perry stated that if the School is giving the money back and if they have no plans on further the use of that money, then it probably should be suspended. Selectman B. Lemire stated that the Attorney's letter is clear that the Planning Board has to make a recommendation and the Board of Selectmen cannot modify it, they have to vote it up or down. The Board of Selectman cannot alter that recommendation whatsoever. Administrator Hoch stated that if the Board wants to provide any

guidance to the Planning Board, it is better to do it on the front end than simply taking something and saying no we do not like this and sending it back and forth through months of a process. Selectman S. Perry stated that he would not recommend canceling any of the fees because all those fees are being used. Selectman G. Lambert stated that if we don't have a clear pathway to use and spend the money then he doesn't believe we should be collecting them. In this particular case, if we do not have anything on the agenda for the elementary school, we shouldn't hold people's money especially in this economy, and he would like clarification from our Attorneys. Selectman B. Lemire stated that it is clear that the Board of Selectmen does not have any authority to modify the Planning Boards recommendation. The Board of Selectmen must either approve or reject the Planning Board recommendation. If the Planning Board wants to make a change in the fee, then they can do that. Selectman S. Perry stated that in regards to the elementary school fee, he agrees if there is no reason behind why we are collecting it and they determine that we no longer need a new facility under growth (which is what the impact fees are for) then he completely agrees with getting rid of the school fee but does not agree with getting rid of all impact fees altogether. Selectman S. Perry wanted to point out that there is a high danger side of getting rid of impact fees altogether, because you may have the intention of bringing in commercial development but in flipside you may get apartment buildings, apartment complexes, workforce housing, etc., you may get all of these type of things that absolutely spikes every need that this community could have and we would get nothing for it and we would be faced with fronting all of the cost. Selectman S. Perry stated that at this point we are going to let the Planning Board come to the BOS with whatever they are doing and we will go from there.

Selectman F. Byron is back in the meeting.

Selectman Committee and Community Reports

Selectman F. Byron stated that the Planning Board has a public hearing tomorrow night (Tuesday, October 18th) on impact fees at 7:00 pm. Selectman F. Byron also stated that he attended the Budget Committee Meeting on Thursday. The meeting started out with the candidates and public who attended to support the candidates and there were two candidates who presented themselves (Mr. Finnegan and Mr. Barker) both candidates presented themselves asking to be appointed to the Budget Committee so we interviewed the Budget Committee. The vote was to appoint Mr. Finnegan to the Budget Committee. Budget presentations that were done were general government buildings; there was a question on the Police Department vestibule; they felt it was not well explained and too expensive. Planning Board, The Administrative Assistant and Health care they had significant questions on that and they want some answers on the number of hours the administrative assistant would work, Planning Board project on impact fees, they didn't quite understand why they were doing an impact fee study and the planning board meeting taking they felt was a little bit high. Zoning Board of adjustment, the cost of secretarial services was a question that they asked. On health agencies there weren't too many questions, one individual suggested and made a motion that the Town should not be funding any health agencies and voted to zero it all out; that was defeated 6-1-0. Everything else went through for Road agent with the exception of snow plowing where there was \$3,000.00 taken out of the salt line. This week the Police department will be voted.

Items Moved from Consent

no items moved

Other Business

Selectman F. Byron brought up an item that he was concerned about which was Mr. Brunelle and his

work on the Town computer systems. He wanted to suggest that the Board is going to potentially put themselves into problems at some point in the future. Mr. Brunelle is doing a great job and he totally supports him, but the problem is that we are now avoiding expenses on behalf of the Town by Mr. Brunelle doing that work. Mr. Byron's thought is that we should document Mr. Brunelle's work and provide that estimate to the Budget Committee, so if we end up in a future situation where Mr. Brunelle is not able to support the Town the way he has been, that we all understand the costs we have been avoiding that may need to be added to a future budget.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to the Board of Selectmen to adjourn the public portion of the meeting. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

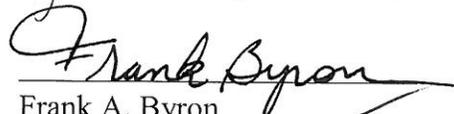
The next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be on October 24th at 7:00 pm.



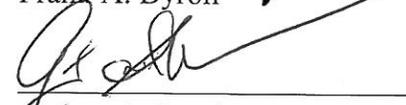
Steven D. Perry, Chairman



John R. Brunelle, V. Chairman



Frank A. Byron



George A. Lambert

Brent T. Lemire

