

## Town of Litchfield

Selectmen's Meeting

October 24, 2011

Members present: Steve Perry, Chairman  
John R. Brunelle, Vice Chairman  
Frank A. Byron  
George A. Lambert  
Brent T. Lemire  
Also present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator

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

7:00 p.m. Call to Order

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Review of items for consent**

1. Minutes of October 17, 2011
2. Renewal of Junkyard License – Warren's Auto Body
3. Release of Bond for Blackbird Lane
4. Acceptance of Blackbird Lane as Town Road
5. Sexual Harassment Policy
6. Temporary Alternative Duty Policy
7. Slips, Trips & Falls Policy

### **Approval of Consent Items**

Selectman F. Byron motioned to approve the items for consent. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

### **Request for items – Other Business**

Selectman J. Brunelle would like to review the document he wrote for the Budget Committee in regards to the Town's needs for IT services.

### **Public Input**

None

### **Budgets**

## **Fire**

### **Fire Administration 4220.10**

The bottom line for this budget is \$43,934.00, an increase of \$11,119.00. The changes reflect the Salary line which mirrors the discussion the Board of Selectmen had last week for 24 hours per week for 42 week at the current rate of \$25.94. The other change is a shift recognizing the number of cell phone lines we are providing in the department. We have people who are carrying two phones and wish not to carry two phones. It was the Chief's suggestion to switch people over to a phone stipend rather than paying for additional phones. The budget reflects keeping one department cell phone and the other phones that had been assigned to Chief, Deputies and Captain switching over to a stipend approach, \$25 per month for 5 phones. If individuals choose not to have a Town phone then they may choose the stipend option.

Computer Software contracts are down slightly because they had a couple of onetime expenses in this current year for radio programming, narrow band radio licensing.

Copier charges line reflects our current copier lease pricing.

Chiefs Vehicle Lease/Purchase line: last payment was this year so that drops \$8,999.00 out of this budget.

Selectman B. Lemire motion to move the bottom line of \$43,934.00 for account 4220.10 Fire Administration.

Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

### **Fire Fighting 4220.20**

This budget proposed \$329,486.00, a decrease of \$18,861.00. The wage line reflects the current movement for our two full time Fire Fighters through the wage scale. Line 125, the call firefighter line shows a decrease of \$8,716.00 based on keeping the \$84,000 we had last year and subtract 8 hours a week for 42 weeks at \$25.94. The on-call amount that the current chief has been showing each week has come out of that call line at 8 hours a week for 42 weeks at \$25.94. The anticipation for the new Fire Chief is that we wouldn't be tapping the call wages for that.

Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board to set line 125 Call Firefighters wages to \$65,284.00. Selectman S. Perry seconded the motion. Selectman J. Brunelle motion to amend line 125 Call Firefighters wages line to \$70,000.00. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The amendment carried 4-1-0. The amended main motion for \$70,000.00 carried 4-1-0.

Line 126, Coverage for fulltime Firefighters has decreased \$1,455.00. This is where we cover for vacation, sick, personal time any time that may be carried over by Full time staff so we have two people on duty. This is also where if we are in a situation we bring in a third person for coverage in anticipation of bad weather.

Line 128, Weekend coverage, this line anticipates 24 hours per weekend for 45 weekends at \$17.50 per hour. To date not every weekend is covered. This is a decrease of \$8,135.00. Selectman S. Perry motioned to change line 128 in Firefighting Budget to \$23,625.00 for 30 hours at 45 weeks. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-2-0.

Line 129 Fire Inspector remains unchanged at \$2,640.00.

The Fire Department Overtime line 140 reflects 175 hours at the current rates of pay.

Health and Dental reflects the current rates.

Short Term Disability Insurance for the full time was moved out; the call company insurance has remained.

The Fire Pump Service and Certification Line 430 had an extra \$5,000.00 in the 2011 line because we knew there was going to be some service required. \$6,000 should be the appropriate level to make sure we have the pump serviced and UL certified.

The provision line has been reduced \$500.00.

The new bottom line is \$328,926.00. Selectman B. Lemire motion to move \$328,927.00 for line 4220.20 Fire Fighting. Selectman S. Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Prevention 4220.30**

This line represents fire prevention activities including open house, GMS school program, fire parade; CPR and basic first aid outreach; for \$1,000.00. Selectman G. Lambert motioned to move the amount of \$1,000.00 for 4220.30 Fire Prevention. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire – Training 4220.40**

The proposed budget of \$41,966.00 reflects a decrease of \$1,300.00. The slight decrease comes out of the training classes from \$10,000.00 to \$9,000.00. The Mileage and Tolls line for \$700.00 reflects a decrease of \$300.00. Selectman B. Lemire motion to move \$41,966.00 for Fire Training 4220.40. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Communications 4220.50**

This line remains unchanged at \$17,600.00. Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move \$17,600.00 for line 4220.50 Fire Communications. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Repair 4220.60**

The proposed budget is for \$51,950.00. The one place where there was a recommended decrease was in the air compressor service contract. The actual cost of that was \$500.00. Selectman B. Lemire motion to move the amount of \$51,950.00 for line 4220.60 Fire Repair. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Medical Services 4220.70**

This line remains unchanged at \$10,700.00. Selectman B. Lemire motion to move the amount of \$10,700.00 for line 4220.70 Fire Medical Services. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Station 4220.80**

The proposed budget is for \$16,000.00. Increased electricity based on our run rate this year at \$475.00 a month. Repairs and maintenance decreased \$1,500.00. The cleaning supplies line was reduced \$200.00. Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move \$16,000.00 for line 4220.80 Fire Station. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Fire Incident & Fire Investigations 4220.85**

This line remains unchanged at \$500.00. Selectman B. Lemire motioned to amend line 740 for equipment purchases to \$50.00. Selectman F. Byron seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0. Selectman B. Lemire motion to amend the amendment for \$50.00 to \$0.00. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The amended main motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Personnel Administration 4155**

One item not calculated through any budget or allocated in Personnel Administrations any adjustment to wage schedule for cost of living. In the Police contract, we use the Boston-Brockton-Nashua CPI-W measured September to September (with a cap of 2%). The latest data release shows that this rate is 4% ("regular CPI" for the region is 3.7%). Social Security announced increase in benefits of 3.6% this week.

The first line which is an expense line is carried as a zero budget because we do the monthly charge for the

people participating in our flexible spending plan. They are moving wages out of being taxable wages.

**Short Term disability** \$6,684.00. We had \$7,675.00 budgeted across multiple departments which are things that have moving out over time. Of that we moved \$6,684.00 into this budget. The \$1,000.00 reflects a savings by changing plans.

**Social Security** is showing an increase based on a calculation of the spread sheet that went in last year which missed capturing FICA for our full time Firefighters.

**Medicare**, there is a slight change there which reflects the overall change in base wage subject to that.

In the Retirement lines there are several things happening. Employee retirement reflects a decrease of about \$9,500.00. The current rate for next year is 8.8% of wages, in the 2011 budget we had budgeted six months at 9.16% and six months at 11.09%. With the shift in retirement rates that became effective in August we are now paying 8.8%.

**Firefighter Retirement** the prevailing rate for next year is 22.89% of wages for our fulltime Firefighters. It had been 17.28% and 20.08% for 2011.

**Police Retirement** the rate right now and into next year is 19.95% of wages (set by the State). When the Legislature made some changes to the retirement system the retirement board passed down new rates. The police retirement is where we are really feeling the cost shift down; we had been at 13.66% for the first six months projected at 16.62% for the last six months of 2011. There is a \$46,000.00 increase in this line.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move \$400,558.00 for account 4155 Personnel Administration. Selectman S. Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Administrator Hoch stated that the two things that were touched on are Workers Comp Insurance, while our rate has gone up, he expects that we will be able to come back with a revised lower rate. The policies that the Board has passed under consent for an update to the Sexual Harassment Policy, Temporary Alternative Duties, Slips, Trips and Falls will give us a certification from Primex our insurer called Prime 3, that will help us lower our workers comp premiums. This is something the Joint Loss Committee has been working on over the past year or two to get everything up in place. These are the last few things we have. In the next couple of weeks we may have somebody from Primex here to recognize the Town for that certification and lower our prices.

#### **Contingency 4199.10**

This is unchanged at \$33,000.00.

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to move \$33,000.00 for account 4199.10 Other General Government subheading 840 Contingency. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Administrator Report**

**Tax Rate** – Still waiting. All the documents are in place, the Department of Revenue is publishing who is in the queue to get a tax rate set. Contrary to what people may have read in the Union Leader, the statement by the Commissioner stating that everything is fine and DRA has had no problems setting tax rates; they are delayed but we are on the list. With the help of the school offering to recalculate our payment schedule, we should be able to avoid a TAN unless something dramatic happens.

#### **Old Business**

##### **Highway Projects**

Final bills were received for Roberts Road & Cranberry Lane as well as additional engineering needed for Cranberry Lane. After accounting for retainage and engineering – request an additional authorization of \$6,488.45 from prior year Highway Block Grant Fund. This represents balance remaining in fund. \$1,267.13 of the engineering will be charged to General Fund Highway Engineering. There is a full package of materials from Northpoint on all projects in the Administrator Report folder.

Selectman G. Lambert temporarily left the meeting.

Selectman S. Perry motioned to approve the amount of \$6,488.45. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Selectman G. Lambert returned to the meeting.

### **Warrant Articles**

Draft of articles discussed so far compile with one additional from Administrator Hoch – a winter maintenance expendable trust fund.

Selectman S. Perry suggested adding Ambulance as well.

Administrator Hoch stated that one of the things he mentioned at the last meeting was finding a way to deal with the unexpected growth in solid waste cost. The tool left to us is an expendable trust fund. Mr. Hoch has drafted an article that states, To see if the Town is willing to establish a Solid Waste expendable trust fund pursuing to RSA 31 – 19(a) to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00 for transfer into this fund from the unexpended fund balance and to appoint Selectmen as agents to expend from the fund. The fund can be used for payment of solid waste disposal fees in excess of annual budgeted appropriation for that purpose as well as replacement of capital equipment with a value greater than \$5,000.00.”

Administrator Hoch used the same theory for winter operations which is another exposure that is unpredictable. Instead of budgeting for a worse case every year you create that one time cushion for the unexpected winter and restrict the money for that purpose. The initial suggestion is a Winter Operations expendable trust fund with \$10,000.00 and selectmen as agents of the fund for the payment of snow removal and related cost including wages, contracted services, purchase of salt and sand, in excess of annual budgeted appropriation for those purposes. Mr. Hoch had a conversation with Steve who suggested that he does the same thing for ambulance. The expendable trust funds get refilled by a vote of Town meeting. Selectman F. Byron questioned why we can't just have one expendable trust fund for all purposes. Administrator Hoch stated that you can as long as you have a detailed list. It all depends on what the Board feels will be the best fund set up; separate ones or one big one with every purpose listed. Selectman F. Byron stated that he believes it will be better for the tax payers to have one fund for all purposes. Mr. Hoch stated that they would revisit ambulance because he believes it can be set up as a revolving fund.

Administrator Hoch went over the draft list of potential warrant articles will send out the list

- Appointment of Road Agent
- Parking lot at Fire Station old Town Hall
- Setting the term of Fire Chief

- A cable revolving fund
- The expendable trust funds
- Ambulance revolving fund
- Recreation Coordinator
- A change in the Purchasing Policy for Capital expenditures
- Library – expendable trust fund for their vacation
- Shift to Town Manager form of government

### **Other Items**

Note from Nashua that Nashua Mediation Program has been closed and check is returned.

Had a conversation with Pat Jewett about having a Veterans Day Program at Town Hall on November 13 at 2:00pm. Mrs. Jewett wanted to also make sure everyone was on board with her being involved with continuing to send boxes to our Service men/women.

Our participation with the National Pharmaceutical Drug take back day is this Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. We will be set up outside in the Parking lot.

Trick or Treating is next Monday from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

Selectman B. Lemire motion that the Litchfield Board of Selectmen affirms the decision made by the Chief to set the Halloween Trick or Treating hours from 6:00 to 8:00 pm on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2011. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Selectman G. Lambert stated that when we have occupy Litchfield, He has real concerns about us arresting individuals who are protesting after our curfew hours. Selectman G. Lambert motioned to not arrest anyone for legally protesting under the first amendment in NH after curfew. The motion failed due to lack of second.

### **Selectman Committee and Community Reports**

Selectman B. Lemire stated that they had a lengthy Budget Committee meeting last Thursday. They went over budgets. The budget committee is continuing on the Town Budget and is on target.

Selectman F. Byron stated that the Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the impact fee proposals that would come to the Selectmen. The original write up of the proposals was that the Planning Board will “suspend” the fees based upon that and the advice of Town Counsel the feeling was that we should “readjust” the fees in particular to the Elementary School to zero. The Board decided to hold another hearing based on this change in terminology.

### **Items Moved from Consent**

No items moved from consent.

### **Other Business**

Selectman J. Brunelle stated that at the last Selectmen’s meeting, the Board approved his request to fund the

rebuild and redesign of our computer environment to deal with some shortcomings and some single points of failures that have needed to be addressed for a while. We presented the same budget to the Budget Committee and a lot of questions were asked. They are looking for a lot more detail. Mr. Brunelle came up with a four page document to show his three year outlook; to describe what the environment looks like today and some of the concerns of why the environment is of concern and then outline two options. The first option is the option we prefer and highlighting if we do not go with the preferred option, what would it take to leave things the way they are and fix some of the issues. In the year one and two section, it describes the components and pieces that he has asked for and describes some of the benefits and our intent. In year three, Mr. Brunelle highlighted some of the goals addressing the desk top environments. In year three, Mr. Brunelle also highlighted a replacement phone system. Mr. Brunelle stated that this is just an outline of what he would be asking for. On the final last plan, this was based on if he did nothing and kept the two entities separate what it would cost to fix the single points of failures, give us the capacity that we need.

Selectman B. Lemire stated to Chairman Perry that Mr. Brunelle did an outstanding job presenting to the Budget Committee. Selectman S. Perry thanked Mr. Brunelle for his hard work and time.

Selectman S. Perry motioned to the Board of Selectmen to adjourn the public portion of the meeting to go into Non Public session per RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) – Compensation of Public Employees.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Byron – yes, Mr. Lemire – yes, Mr. Brunelle – yes, Mr. Lambert – yes and Mr. Perry – yes.

The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

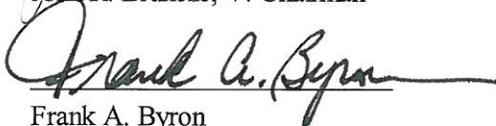
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Steven D. Perry, Chairman



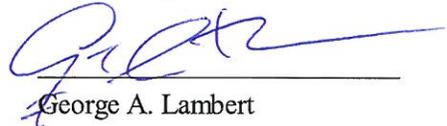
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John R. Brunelle, V. Chairman



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Frank A. Byron



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George A. Lambert

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Brent T. Lemire

