

1  
2  
3 **Minutes of the**  
4 **Litchfield Budget Committee**  
5 **Meeting**

6 **Held on January 12, 2012**

7  
8 The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, January 12, 2012 at  
9 Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

10  
11 **PRESENT:** J Harte (Chairman), M Falzone (Vice Chairman), B Spencer, C Pascucci,  
12 T Finnegan, J York (School Board Representative), J Brunelle (Board of Selectmen  
13 Representative)

14  
15 **ABSENT:** B Lemire, R Peeples

16  
17 Mr. Harte called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

18  
19  
20 **1. PUBLIC INPUT**

21 There was none.

22  
23 **2. MINUTES**

24 The Committee agreed to defer approval of outstanding minutes.

25  
26 **3. SCHOOL BUSINESS**

27 **a) Warrant Article 3 - Reading Program**

28 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

29 *Move to open the 2013 School District Operating budget for the purpose of*  
30 *discussing the summer Reading Program*

31 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

32 **VOTE:** 5-2-0 (Messrs. York and Finnegan opposed the motion)

33 **The motion carried.**

34  
35 ***Discussion:***

36 Mr. Finnegan stated he thought the program should be on a warrant article and  
37 agreed with Mr. Pascucci who had pointed out in an e-mail that this was a new  
38 voluntary cost and should be voted upon by residents. He stated he would  
39 therefore not change the operating budget to add this in.

40  
41 Mr. Spencer clarified that any motion on the matter would be to reduce the  
42 operating budget.

43  
44  
45

1 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

2 ***Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee hereby reduces the 2013 School***  
3 ***District Operating Budget from \$20,814,909 to \$20,809,694***

4 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

5  
6 ***Discussion:***

7 Mr. Spencer clarified this was a reduction of \$5,215. There followed a discussion  
8 for clarification with respect to the proposed warrant article.

9 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

10 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

11 ***Move to amend the reduced figure in the first motion to \$20,808,494***

12 ***Discussion:***

13 Mr. Spencer stated this was a reduction of \$6,415 which added \$1,200 to the  
14 reduction for supplies for the reading program and removes the salary costs.  
15 There followed a discussion with respect to what the correct figures should be.  
16 Mr. York stated the School Board will pull the warrant if the Budget Committee  
17 leaves the budget unchanged. There followed further discussion for clarification  
18 with respect to what will happen if a reduction is made to the operating budget.

19  
20 ***VOTE on the amendment:*** 4-3-0 (Messrs. Finnegan, York and Brunelle opposed  
21 the motion)

22 **The motion carried.**

23  
24 ***VOTE on the amended motion:*** 5-2-0 (Messrs. York and Brunelle opposed the  
25 motion)

26 **The motion carried.**

27  
28 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

29 ***Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee hereby moves Article 3 to the 2013***  
30 ***School District Warrant with recommendation***

31 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

32 ***Discussion:***

33 It was clarified this article was for the summer reading program. Mr. Spencer  
34 clarified the dollar amount cannot be changed and the Budget Committee was  
35 only voting to move it with recommendation.

36 **VOTE:** 6-1-0 (Mr. Finnegan opposed the motion)

37  
38 ***Article 6:***

39 Mr. York explained the dollar amount has changed as the School Board is asking  
40 to move this from self funded into the operating budget. Mr. Spencer clarified the  
41 process with respect to changing the Budget Committee's recommendation for the  
42 benefit of the Committee.

43  
44 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

45 ***Move to re-open Article 6***

46 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

1 **VOTE:** 2-5-0 (Messrs. Falzone and Harte voted in favor of the motion)  
 2 **The motion failed.**

3  
 4 ***Discussion:***

5 It was explained that a petition warrant article has been added and Mr. Spencer  
 6 suggested dealing with this at the end of the hearing. Mr. Harte clarified the  
 7 Budget Committee does not have to recommend this article.

8  
 9 Mr. York confirmed there was no LEA contract at this time.

10  
 11 **4. TOWN BUSINESS**

12 Mr. Harte explained there was a new Article 5 for the Cable Committee Revolving  
 13 Fund. It was pointed out the Committee still had to vote on the COLA increase. The  
 14 members agreed to table discussion of Article 5 until after the hearing.

15  
 16 Mr. Harte read Article 10 for the record.

17  
 18 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer  
 19 ***Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee hereby forwards Article 10 to the 2012***  
 20 ***Town Warrant with recommendation***

21 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

22 **VOTE:** 4-2-1 (Mr. Pascucci abstained, Mr. York voted against the motion)

23  
 24 **5. MEMBER INPUT**

25 There was none at this time.

26  
 27 **6. PUBLIC INPUT**

28 There was none at this time.

29  
 30 **MOTION:** by Mr. York  
 31 ***Move to adjourn until after the Budget Hearing.***

32 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

33 **VOTE:** 7-0-0

34 **The motion carried unanimously.**

35  
 36 The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. and was called to order again at 8:43 p.m. after the  
 37 Budget Hearing. Mr. Peeples joined the meeting at this time.

38  
 39 **1. SCHOOL BUSINESS**

40 Petition school – default budget voting article

41 Mr. Finnegan suggested that unless there was a Budget Committee policy to vote to  
 42 forward every warrant with or without recommendation the Committee should not  
 43 recommend this article as it was not a money issue. Messrs. Peeples agreed with Mr.  
 44 Finnegan. Mr. York stated he felt the Committee should make a recommendation one  
 45 way or another. Mr. Spencer stated that although the legislature has decided the  
 46 Budget Committee could have this role he would rather let the voters make the

1 decision and the Budget Committee should not make any recommendation. It was the  
 2 consensus of the Committee at this point not to approve with or without  
 3 recommendation.

4  
 5 **2. TOWN BUSINESS**

6 **a) Article 5 (Cable Committee Revolving Fund)**

7 Mr. Harte explained the Committee had not voted on this because no money was  
 8 being appropriated, but there is money attached to this and the Board of  
 9 Selectmen had requested the Budget Committee make a recommendation.

10  
 11 **Discussion:**

12 Mr. Peeples asked Mr. Brunelle why the Board of Selectmen would not move the  
 13 franchise fee to zero and Mr. Brunelle responded, stating there is a fee today, and  
 14 they struggle to fund the Committee's needs. He pointed out this is a way to give  
 15 money to operate the Cable Committee and make capital improvements. He  
 16 pointed out the residents can choose to let the article die. He clarified the Board  
 17 of Selectmen's intent was to leave the fee as it stands and will in future have to  
 18 find other ways to fund the Cable Committee. There followed a discussion in  
 19 which Mr. Finnegan stated his opinion was this would be an individual vote and  
 20 should not be done as a committee. Mr. Brunelle pointed out the Board was only  
 21 trying to set up what it would cost to operate the Cable Committee. There was a  
 22 consensus of the Committee that it should not make a recommendation.

23  
 24 **MOTION:** by Mr. Falzone

25 Move to re-open Article 10 (Cola)

26 **SECOND:** Mr. Peeples

27  
 28 **Discussion:**

29 Mr. Falzone pointed out he had not voted in favor of this as he had misunderstood  
 30 what the Committee was voting for and he therefore wished to change his vote.

31 **VOTE:** 7-0-1 (Mr. Finnegan abstained)

32 **The motion carried.**

33  
 34 **RE-VOTE:** 3-4-1 (Mr. Pascucci abstained, Messrs. Brunelle, Finnegan, Peeples  
 35 and Falzone voted against the motion)

36  
 37 In response to a question from Mr. Peeples, Mr. Harte clarified this vote was in  
 38 line with the vote for the School.

39  
 40 There was a discussion, led by Mr. Brunelle, about whether the Budget  
 41 Committee ought to approve warrant articles with or without recommendation.  
 42 Mr. Harte provided his opinion that the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is a  
 43 broken system and he felt the problem lies in the fact that the salary scale needs to  
 44 be fixed. Mr. Finnegan pointed out it is difficult to ask teachers to make  
 45 concessions if everyone else in Town is receiving increases.  
 46

1 **3. PUBLIC INPUT**

2 Mr. Guerrette pointed out the voters requested the Budget Committee make  
3 recommendations. There was further discussion on the Committee's decision.

4

5 **MOTION:** by Mr. Pascucci

6 *Move to adjourn*

7 **SECOND:** Mr. Falzone

8 **VOTE:** 8-0-0

9

10 There being no further business before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

11

12

13 **Minutes by:** *Sandra Maxwell (Recording Secretary)*

14 **Date approved:** *February 23, 2012*

15