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

6 **Held on October 13, 2011**

7
8 The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, October 13, 2011 at
9 Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

10
11 **PRESENT:** J Harte (Chairman), B Spencer, R Peeples, C Pascucci, J York (School
12 Board Representative), F Byron (Board of Selectmen Representative)

13
14 **ALSO PRESENT:** J Hoch (Town Administrator)

15
16 **ABSENT:** Mr. Falzone (Vice Chairman), B Lemire (with excuse)

17
18 Mr. Harte called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

19
20 **1. PUBLIC INPUT**

21 *a) Nominations to the Budget Committee*

22 Mr. Harte asked for input the public, and the following residents spoke in support
23 of Timothy Finnegan, 147 Talent Road, one of the applicants for the vacancy left
24 by Ms. Miller's resignation:

25
26 Steve Chapman, 16 Cutler Road
27 Jason Guerrette
28 Joanne Chapman, 16 Cutler Road
29 Trisha D'Alleva, 15 Cutler Road
30 Nick D'Alleva, 15 Cutler Road

31
32 The other applicant, Derek Barka, 8 Simeon Lane was also in attendance, and Mr.
33 Harte invited both applicants to tell the Budget Committee why they wished to
34 become members of the Committee and to provide some background information
35 on themselves. Both applicants stated there were no conflicts of interest which
36 would affect their ability to become members of the Budget Committee, and they
37 both answered other questions from Committee members about their position on a
38 variety of issues the Committee has to deal with.

39
40 There was a discussion with respect to whether the Committee should vote on the
41 position this evening. Mr. Harte called for a vote and the members of the
42 Committee voted unanimously in favor of taking nominations and voting this
43 evening. Mr. Byron informed the Committee that Mr. Hoch could swear the
44 successful applicant into office this evening.
45

1 At the request of Mr. Harte, nominations were made and voted upon as follows:

2
3 **MOTION** by: Mr. Pascucci

4 *Move to nominate Timothy Finnegan to fill the vacant position on the*
5 *Litchfield Budget Committee for the remainder of the 2011/12 budget year*

6 **SECOND:** Mr. Peeples

7 Mr. Pascucci provided the reasons for his nomination.

8 **VOTE:** 5-1-0 (Mr. York voted against the motion)

9 **The motion carried.**

10
11 **MOTION** by: Mr. York

12 *Move to nominate Derek Barka to fill the vacant position on the Litchfield*
13 *Budget Committee for the remainder of the 2011/12 budget year*

14 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

15 Mr. York provided the reasons for his nomination

16 **VOTE:** 1-5-0 (Mr. York voted for the motion)

17 **The motion failed.**

18
19 Mr. Harte thanked Mr. Barka on behalf of the Committee for his application. Mr.
20 Finnegan was sworn in by Mr. Hoch and joined the Committee for the remainder
21 of the meeting.

22
23 **2. MINUTES**

24 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

25 *Move to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2011 Litchfield Budget*
26 *Committee meeting as written*

27 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

28 **VOTE:** 4-0-3 (Messrs. Byron, Peeples and Finnegan abstained)

29 **The motion carried.**

30
31 **3. TOWN BUSINESS**

32 **a) Town Budget Presentations**

33 Mr. Hoch reported as follows:

34 **Account 4194.10 - General Government Buildings**

35 *Line item 120 (Wages – Custodian):* The figure has been reduced and is based on
36 hours being used at present.

37
38 *Line item 410 (Town Hall, Police Station Electricity):* This has been increased
39 based upon usage.

40
41 *Line item 411 (Town Hall, Police Station Propane):* The price per gallon has
42 increased resulting in an overall increase in the line.

43
44 *Line item 431 (Town Hall, Police Station HVAC Maintenance Contract):* In
45 response to a query from Mr. Spencer it was confirmed the cost is based upon the
46 contract.

1 *Line item 630 (Building Maintenance & Repair):* The costs have increased due to
2 aging of the building and the electrical and HVAC. Kevin Lynch provided
3 clarification with respect to items covered within this line versus line item 431.
4 Mr. Hoch reported on how they intend to alter the police vestibule, explaining this
5 will provide added privacy and security. There followed a brief discussion on the
6 matter.

7
8 *Line item 413 (Meeting House Electricity):* Mr. Lynch clarified why the
9 electricity for the Historical Society building has been put into a separate line.

10
11 It was reported that there may possibly be a warrant article for replacement of the
12 Town Hall roof in 2012 or 2013, and there followed a discussion for the benefit of
13 Mr. Finnegan why this would be in a warrant article. There was also a discussion
14 with Mr. Lynch about the warranty for the current roof.

15
16 **Account 4191.10 - Planning Board**

17 This account is down overall, but there has been an increase in line items 210
18 (Health Insurance) and 211 (Dental Insurance).

19
20 *Line item 344 (Secretarial/Steno Services):* This line has been reduced.

21
22 *Line item 392 (NRPC Planner):* The hours for the planner have been reduced, and
23 Mr. Byron explained what the planner gets involved in.

24
25 *Line item 125 (Wages – Admin Assistant):* Mr. Spencer asked why the
26 expenditure for this year is low and it was explained that the Assistant only comes
27 in when required. Mr. Spencer queried why the holder of the position is still on
28 healthcare if she is working less than 21 hours, and Mr. Hoch agreed to obtain a
29 history of the hours for the next meeting. There followed a discussion about what
30 the Admin Assistant does and it was noted there have been discussions about the
31 possibility that she could do some of the work currently done by the NRPC
32 planner thereby reducing the costs in line item 392.

33 **Action: Mr. Hoch**

34
35 *Line item 211 (Dental Insurance):* It was reported there was a change in the plan
36 during 2011, and there followed a discussion with respect to offsetting the
37 increase against the cost of the reduction in the Planner hours. Mr. Hoch stated
38 the history of the Admin Assistant hours will help explain this.

39
40 Responding to a query from Mr. Finnegan with respect to whether Planning
41 Board expenses are offset by fees, Messrs. Byron and Hoch explained some costs
42 are charged against specific projects and are not seen within the Planning Board's
43 budget.

44
45 *Line item 393 (NRPC Special Projects):* Mr. Harte asked whether the money for
46 the impact fee assessment will be used this year, and Mr. Byron explained the

1 Planning Board needs to hire a consultant to generate a document detailing the
2 methodology of how impact fees are calculated. Mr. Hoch further explained the
3 Town is currently looking for an alternative person to do this work at a reduced
4 cost and the Board intends to use the funds this year. The benefits of doing the
5 assessment now were explained.
6

7 *Line item 344 (Secretarial/Steno Services):* Responding to a query from Mr.
8 Spencer as to why this line has not been reduced more based upon expenditure for
9 this year, Mr. Hoch explained they are unsure what the business of the Board will
10 be next year. There followed a discussion with respect to the number of meetings
11 and why it is difficult to provide annualized expense information.
12

13 **Account 4191.30 – Zoning Board**

14 Mr. Spencer reported the historical spending shows this account trending in the
15 \$1,000 – \$1,500 range and queried leaving the budget at the same level as this
16 year. Mr. Byron explained what the Zoning Board gets involved in and there
17 followed a discussion about the use of Contingency funds to make up unexpected
18 expenses.
19

20 Mr. Harte questioned the rationale which had been used for the number of
21 meetings and the secretarial rate of \$25 per hour) as explained by Mr. Hoch.
22

23 **Account 4415 - Health Agencies**

24 There has been a slight increase in the amount requested from outside agencies.
25 Mr. Hoch clarified that the proposed budget amounts did not reflect the full
26 request of the agencies, and that these are agencies which provide assistance for
27 Litchfield residents. There was discussion for further clarification.
28

29 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

30 *Move to approve a bottom line of \$6,852 for account 4415, Health Agencies in*
31 *the 2012 Operating Budget*

32 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

33 Mr. Finnegan stated he did not think the Town should be making charitable
34 donations and these should be at an individual level.
35

36 **MOTION:** by Mr. Finnegan

37 *Move to amend the bottom line for account 4415, Health Agencies in the 2012*
38 *Operating Budget by setting it at zero*

39 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

40 Messrs. Pascucci and Peebles spoke in support of keeping the budget at its
41 proposed level.

42 **VOTE:** 1-6-0 (Mr. Finnegan voted in support of the motion)
43

44 **VOTE on main motion:** 6-1-0 (Mr. Finnegan voted against the motion)
45
46

1 **b) Voting on Town Budgets**

2 **Account 4311.10 – Road Agent**

3 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

4 *Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line*
5 *of \$14,897 for account 4311.10, Road Agent in the 2012 Operating Budget*

6 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

7 Mr. Hoch confirmed the Town insurance covers liability for volunteers while
8 working on the Highway department roof.

9 **VOTE:** 6-0-1 (Mr. Finnegan abstained)

10 **The motion carried.**

11
12 **Account 4311.20 – Engineering**

13 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

14 *Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line*
15 *of \$12,000 for account 4311.20, Engineering in the 2012 Operating Budget*

16 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

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

18 **The motion carried.**

19
20 **Account 4312.10 – Highway Road Maintenance Projects**

21 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

22 *Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line*
23 *of \$201,917 for account 4312.10, Highway Road Maintenance Projects in the*
24 *2012 Operating Budget*

25 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

26 **VOTE:** 7-0-0

27 **The motion carried unanimously.**

28
29 **Account 4312.20 - Road Maintenance**

30 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

31 *Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line*
32 *of \$315,714 for account 4312.20, Road Maintenance in the 2012 Operating*
33 *Budget*

34 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

35 **Discussion:**

36 Mr. Pascucci requested clarification on line item 125, Workmen Wages from Mr.
37 Hoch who provided details of work which was not carried out last year when they
38 did not have full staffing. He also clarified the workmen were ‘on call’ only.

39 There was further discussion on the use of contractors for the benefit of Mr.

40 Finnegan.

41 **VOTE:** 7-0-0

42 **The motion carried unanimously.**

43
44 **Account 4312.30 – Highway Storm Drains**

45 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

1 ***Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line***
 2 ***of \$35,000 for account 4312.30, Highway Storm Drains in the 2012 Operating***
 3 ***Budget***

4 **SECOND:** Mr. Spencer

5 Mr. Hoch provided the rationale for the increase in this account for the benefit of
 6 Mr. Finnegan.

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

8 **The motion carried unanimously.**

9

10 **Account 4312.50 – Snow Plowing**

11 **MOTION:** by Mr. Byron

12 ***Move that the Litchfield Budget Committee does hereby approve a bottom line***
 13 ***of \$88,321 for account 4312.50, Snow Plowing in the 2012 Operating Budget***

14 **SECOND:** Mr. Pascucci

15 ***Discussion:***

16 Responding to a query from Mr. Spencer with respect to the amount for salt
 17 purchases Mr. Hoch stated that based upon historical figures he would prefer to
 18 increase the amount budgeted for salt. He also reported they are hoping the new
 19 technology in the trucks will result in a decrease in salt use long term and there
 20 followed a discussion on the subject.

21

22 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

23 ***Move to reduce line item 686, Salt Purchases to \$60,206 in the 2012 Operating***
 24 ***Budget for account***

25 **SECOND:** Mr. Peeples

26 **VOTE:** 6-1-0 (Mr. Byron opposed the motion)

27 **The motion carried.**

28

29 ***Discussion:***

30 Mr. Finnegan spoke in support of keeping this budget low, suggesting it should be
 31 level funded and Mr. Hoch provided the justification for the increases.

32

33 ***VOTE on a new bottom line of \$85,321 for account 4312.50, Snow Plowing:***

34 6-1-0 (Mr. Byron opposed the motion)

35 **The motion carried.**

36

37 It was agreed to vote on the Police Department budget at the next meeting and
 38 that Mr. Hoch would arrange to update Messrs. Peeples and Finnegan on that
 39 budget prior to that meeting.

40 ***Action: Mr. Hoch***

41

42 **4. SCHOOL BUSINESS**

43 Mr. York queried with Mr. Hoch who is responsible for maintaining the rope course
 44 and Mr. Hoch reported he thought it would be the Recreation Commission but that
 45 there was no specific care and maintenance for the course in its budget for next year.

46

1 Mr. York reported the following:

- 2
- 3 • The School Board has announced the resignation of Mr. Schlichter, Principal of
4 GMS and Mr. Manseau, Principal of CHS. He confirmed they would both be
5 gone by June 30, 2012 and that there would only be a retirement package for Mr.
6 Schlichter.
 - 7
 - 8 • The replacement process for the new Superintendent will begin at the end of
9 October and the Board will be assisted by an outside company.
 - 10
 - 11 • There is a good pool of candidates for the Assistant Principal replacement.
 - 12

13 Mr. Harte queried a discussion which had taken place at the School Board meeting
14 between Mr. Martin and the Board relative to the CPI (consumer price index). Mr.
15 York reported the discussion related to custodial supplies, books and school supplies
16 and he clarified that the conversation had been about justification for an increase in
17 those lines in the budget. Mr. York reported the Administration team will be looking
18 through the Superintendent's budget and re-presenting the budget to the School
19 Board in a few weeks. Mr. Pascucci suggested the School should go out to bid for
20 supplies, and do so now rather than waiting.

21

22 **5. MEMBER INPUT**

23 Mr. Finnegan thanked Committee for his nomination.

24

25 **6. PUBLIC INPUT**

26 There was no public input.

27

- 28 • **Upcoming meetings**

- 29 ○ October 20 , 2010

30

31 **MOTION:** by Mr. Spencer

32 *Move to adjourn.*

33 **SECOND:** Mr. Peeples

34 **VOTE:** 7-0-0

35 **The motion carried unanimously.**

36

37 There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

38

39

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

41 **Date approved:** *October 20, 2011*