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

6 **Held on September 22, 2011**

7
8 The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, September 22, 2011 at
9 Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

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

14
15 **Also present:** J Hoch (Town Administrator)

16
17 **ABSENT:** R Peebles

18
19 Mr. Harte called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

20
21 **1. PUBLIC INPUT**

22 There was no input from members of the public.

23
24 **2. MINUTES**

25 **MOTION:** by Mr. Falzone

26 *Move to approve the minutes of the June 30, 2011 Litchfield Budget Committee*
27 *meeting as written*

28 **SECOND:** Ms. Miller

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

30 **The motion carried unanimously.**

31
32 **3. TOWN BUSINESS**

33 Mr. Lemire stated he had nothing to report other than the 2012 Town budget.

34
35 Mr. Harte asked whether the Town would provide binders for members of the
36 Committee who would like them and Mr. Hoch agreed to organize this. Mr. Harte
37 polled the Committee and confirmed three binders would be required.

38 **Action: J Hoch**

39
40 Mr. Lemire commended Mr. Hoch on the budget preparation and deferred to him to
41 present each account. Mr. Hoch suggested he should cover Solid Waste
42 Administration at the next meeting as it is the account with the most changes.

43
44 Mr. Harte reviewed the Committee's procedure for reviewing accounts and voting.
45 He stressed that anyone wishing to bring an account to the vote this evening may do

1 so. It was agreed that Committee members should send questions directly to Mr.
2 Hoch before Tuesday, September 20, 2011 with a copy to all members of the
3 Committee. There followed a brief discussion relative to voting and the Committee
4 agreed not to make a policy with respect to when voting should take place, and
5 remain flexible.

6
7 ***Account 4130 – Board of Selectmen***

8 *Line item 560 (Dues & Subscriptions):* There was a discussion about this item as
9 well as the cost savings which can be achieved through membership of LGC.

10
11 Mr. Hoch reported a net decrease of \$1,182 for the account. There were no
12 questions from the Committee.

13
14 ***Account 4130.20 - Administration***

15 Mr. Hoch pointed out the Town has changed its short term disability provider and the
16 whole cost for this item across the entire budget will appear under Personnel
17 Administration and has been removed from the other accounts.

18
19 *Line item 810 (Mileage and tolls):* Mr. Hoch reported the mileage amount has
20 increased to 55cents/mile. In response to a query from Mr. Falzone, Mr. Hoch
21 clarified that he has not used this line this year to date.

22
23 In response to a query from Mr. Spencer, Mr. Hoch clarified his contract expires next
24 year, and that increases for his position are covered under his contract.

25
26 Mr. Hoch confirmed for Mr. Pascucci that renewal of health insurance policies takes
27 place on July 1st and the figure received from the provider is a ‘not to exceed’ figure.

28
29 There was a discussion for clarification relative to the procedure for updating
30 information into the budget sheets.

31
32 Mr. Spencer pointed out that health insurance figures came in lower than anticipated
33 last year and the Committee may modify the estimated figure shown on the budget
34 sheet if it wishes.

35
36 ***Account 4130.30 - Town Meeting***

37 Mr. Hoch explained that half the increase in this account is due to the additional
38 election. He went on to explain the other changes. There was a discussion relative
39 to the town report, and Mr. Hoch pointed out the Town only prints these for the
40 Town meeting.

41 *Line item 740 (Equipment Purchase):* There was a discussion with respect to the
42 AccuVote machine and Mr. Hoch agreed to check the cost of rental for comparison
43 purposes.

44 ***Action: Mr. Hoch***

45
46

1 **Account 4140.10 - Town Clerk**

2 Mr. Hoch pointed out the increases in the account. He confirmed the salary
3 increases are due to longevity and movement through the salary plan. Mr. Spencer
4 clarified for Mr. Pascucci that the costs related to the Town Clerk are split between
5 two budgets (the other being Tax Collection).

6
7 Mr. Hoch provided an explanation about small supplies items which have been kept
8 within the individual budgets.

9
10 *Line item 621 (Dog tags & licenses):* Mr. Spencer asked how the new figure had
11 been compiled as previous spending is lower, and Mr. Hoch agreed to obtain an
12 answer for next week.

13 **Action: Mr. Hoch**

14
15 *Line item 625 (Postage):* Mr. Hoch reported the budgeted amount is for renewal
16 notices which are done in bulk.

17
18 *Line item 810 (Mileage and tolls):* There was a discussion relative to the trips to the
19 bank to deposit cash and Mr. Hoch explained there is a limit to the amount of cash
20 the Town is permitted to hold at any time.

21
22 *Line item 811 (Seminars & conventions):* Mr. Hoch reported the annual conference
23 cost is shared with the Tax Collection account and he explained about the additional
24 cost of the spring workshop.

25
26 There was a discussion relative to overtime and whether it could be absorbed
27 elsewhere or in some other way.

28
29 **Account 4140.20 - Voter Registration**

30 Mr. Hoch reported a decrease in postage due to a reduction in mailing of the
31 checklists.

32
33 **Account 4150.10 - Accounting**

34 Mr. Hoch explained an increase for longevity has been given. He also reported that
35 secretarial support is now in the Board of Selectmen budget therefore has been
36 reduced here.

37
38 *Line item 390 (Consulting Services):* Mr. Hoch explained the consulting services
39 resource is used for municipal budget finance assistance.

40
41 *Line item 625 (Postage):* Mr. Hoch explained they have moved to a postage
42 machine, and that a negative amount is shown as expended this year due to rebating
43 back to various departments and the fact that spending is lower this year.

44
45 *Line item 813 (Assessing Services):* Mr. Hoch explained assessing services will
46 increase next year. There followed a discussion with respect to the set contract and

1 the estimated five year cost (\$238,610) which includes an amount for revaluation.
2 There was also a discussion with respect to the cost of revaluation.

3
4 ***Account 4150.40 - Tax Collection***

5 *Line item 321 (Property title research):* Mr. Hoch reported the cost of this has
6 dropped due to a change in vendor.

7
8 Responding to a query from Mr. Spencer relative to unpaid taxes this year, Mr. Hoch
9 stated the collection rate has remained consistent. There followed a discussion with
10 respect to the deeding process.

11
12 ***Account 4150.50 - Treasurer***

13 Mr. Hoch reported an increase in the salary for the treasurer. He pointed out that
14 after the March vote this should no longer be an elected position.

15
16 *Line item 440 (Safety deposit box rental):* Mr. Hoch reported they may deduct the
17 cost of this.

18
19 ***Account 4150.90 - Budgeting***

20 There is a reduction in this account due to a change in seminar costs.

21
22 ***Account 4153 - Legal Expenses***

23 *Line item 10-320 (Town Attorney retainer fee):* Mr. Hoch reported an increase in the
24 cost of the contract with Hage Hodes and confirmed the contract expires in 2013.

25
26 *Line item 20-323 (Cable Franchise Negotiation Services):* There was a discussion
27 relative to the negotiations, and Mr. Hoch reported that they will cost less than
28 originally budgeted.

29
30 *Line item 20-328 (Merrimack Valley Regional Water District):* Mr. Hoch reported
31 that Mr. Peeples has recommended not removing this item from the budget as yet,
32 and he confirmed this matter may not be finalized until November or December.

33
34 **4. SCHOOL BUSINESS**

35 Mr. York reported the School District will hold its Deliberative Session next
36 Wednesday with six warrant articles to return \$1.5 million to the taxpayers.

37
38 He also reported that the Administration has taken another look at high school
39 impact fees and has decided it will use them to pay off the bond in January.

40
41 In response to a query from Mr. Spencer with respect to enrolment figures, Mr. York
42 stated he will forward these when they become available.

43 ***Action: Mr. York***

44
45 Mr. Harte reported the School District will provide the 2012 budget information in
46 electronic form, and Mr. Harte requested details for the cost of printed binders.

1 There followed a discussion, initiated by Mr. Spencer with respect to the
2 Committee's preference on the budget format for reviewing the school budget. The
3 Committee members agreed they would prefer to receive the information by location
4 and have the principals present at the presentation.

5
6 Responding to a query from Mr. Spencer with respect to the work on the track, Mr.
7 York reported they do not expect any work to be done until the spring.

8
9 Mr. York reported the Board has received a letter from the teachers and they will be
10 forming a committee to negotiate a new contract

11
12 **5. MEMBER INPUT**

13 There was a discussion initiated by Mr. Pascucci relative to the appropriateness of e-
14 mailing committee members with respect to budgets.

15
16 **6. PUBLIC INPUT**

17 There was no public input.

18
19 • **Upcoming meetings**

- 20 ○ September 22, 2011

21
22 **MOTION:** by Mr. Falzone

23 *Move to adjourn.*

24 **SECOND:** Mr. Lemire

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

26 **The motion carried unanimously.**

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28 There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:17p.m.

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

32 **Date approved:** *September 29, 2011*

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