

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

March 14, 2013

Selectmen's Meeting

Members Present: John R. Brunelle, Chairman
Frank Byron
M. Patricia Jewett
George Lambert

5:00 p.m. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Discussion of Operating Budget article recount

Selectman J. Brunelle mentioned that they are having this meeting to discuss the outcome of Tuesday nights elections. When they saw the vote for being for or against; the difference being 4 votes, whether it passed or didn't pass, the thought was they should recount. John stated that the Board of Selectmen thought they had the authority to request for the recount but learned on Wednesday morning after calling the State that it requires a petition from 10 people, saying they want that vote recounted. Mr. Brunelle mentioned that he is aware of more than 10 people who are willing or have already signed that petition, at this point he does not believe there is any action from the Board's perspective if those 10 people still want to come forward; they can be Board Members, employees or any other citizen of Litchfield. If those people still want to see that recount, that recount would happen; they would file it with Terri Briand and Terri would take action to convene it with the moderator.

Terri Briand, Town Clerk stated that she also had the election handbook that states what John said; RSA:4C The recount, if any 10 voters of the Town shall want a recount, they just sign a petition and hand it in with the \$10 and then Terri will schedule a recount within a five day period. The petition has to be handed in tomorrow before 5:00pm. The recount Board would consist of the Board of Selectmen, the Moderator and herself. Terri mentioned that it needs to be posted so that the individuals can come in and observe. Terri explained that they set up a certain number of people (2 or 3) 3 groups of 2 people and an observer for each (Terri, Moderator and Assistant Moderator) there is also people that can come in from the public to also watch over the vote to make sure everything is being counted and everything goes into a box. Terri mentioned they have a procedure than what was done in 2003 of the way it gets handled. Terri stated that Frank and herself went to a training and it is possible that if on the sheet that prints out on the machine, it prints out that there were 37 blanks, with those 37 blanks, what happens is if someone does not fill out the circle and they put an x or a check mark, the machine does not count that vote. Terri stated that this can go either way, but where there is 37 blanks this could or may not be the votes that change it. Mr. Lambert stated that as

it stands if 10 people go in and sign a form, question the recount, we do a recount. Terri stated absolutely. Mr. Lambert questioned if there was any other action for the Board to take. Mr. Brunelle stated no, if that petition comes forward and it has the right amount of signature's on it, Terri would pull the trigger at that point.

Frank stated that he is against doing a recount for a couple of reasons. Mrs. Jewett asked Frank to explain what his reasons were. Frank stated that we always finish with an excess unspent revenues. The second issue is on the Warrant Article; the Board of Selectmen would be the counters, and he believes the public opinion would be that the Board would be partial in their examination of the ballots. Mr. Byron believes we can live within the \$74,000 default and the proposed budget. Terri stated that the Board can recuse themselves from doing the recount, you would just need to write something to the Moderator stating that you would like to recuse yourself from doing the recount because of the reasons Frank just mentioned, and then the Moderator will then assign someone else to that. Mrs Jewett stated that she is against the Selectmen doing it. Mr. Brunelle stated that it is best to assume that most of the Selectmen will recuse themselves and the Moderator will have to find someone else who is neutral. Mrs. Jewett asked if there was a charge for a recount. Terri stated that there \$10 fee, whoever signed the petition will pay a dollar. Pat asked if we have to pay the people who do the recount. Terri stated that they are all volunteers. Terri explained that the way the fee is, if it was 20 or 30 people, the price is higher, its \$10 because it is a smaller margin of people. Terry stated that the law states that the recount has to be hand counted.

Mr. Brunelle mentioned that there is no action of the Board tonight, they will see what happens tomorrow afternoon and Terri will come forward to the Board with whatever is going to happen next.

Other Business

No other Business

Selectman G. Lambert **motioned** to Adjourn. Selectman J. Brunelle **seconded** the motion. The motion carried **4-0-0**.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be March 18th at 6:00 pm at Town Hall.

Approved March 18, 2013