

**Minutes of the
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting
Held on October 15, 2015**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2015 at Campbell High School, One Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

PRESENT: C Couture (Chair), K Douglas (Vice Chair), C Pascucci, B Spencer, R Keating, D Vaillancourt, B Bourque (School Board Representative), F Bryon (Selectmen's Representative), T Brown (Town Administrator)

Absent: R Peebles (excused)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

• PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

3. REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Mr. Byron mentioned that Mr. Brunelle is in attendance to answer questions regarding the 2016 IT budget. He requested for the Budget Committee to move up actions for the IT budget so that Mr. Brunelle can attend another meeting.

4. REVIEW/ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

• October 8, 2015

The minutes of October 8, 2015 were postponed to the October 22 meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Couture reported that there was a question from Mr. Pascucci regarding IT budget items. She indicated that she forwarded his question to the Board of Selectmen representative with the minutes of that discussion.

6. SCHOOL DISTRICT

• October 1 Enrollment

Mrs. Couture commented that enrollment has increased by 47 students over the projections. She mentioned that she has been noticing an increase in home sales. She expects as the economy improves enrollments may increase. She indicated that she is under the impression the NHSBA will provide enrollment projections this year.

Mr. Spencer commented that he has done some work with enrollment projections and it appears that enrollment for Kindergarten and grade 1 will be low next year.

Mrs. Couture commented Kindergarten enrollment this year is the lowest we have seen.

Mr. Spencer commented in terms of real estate condo sales are increasing.

- **Financial Report**

Mr. Spencer commented that the report reflects the increase for health insurance is projected at 4.8% instead of 6.9%, which was quoted from the insurance carrier. He noted the report states this is due in part to plan changes from staff turnover and life changes. He indicated that he looked at the chart of actual expenditures compared to what was actually budgeted this year and noted they are 49% less than what was requested from the Budget Committee. Mr. Spencer believes those numbers confirm the reductions made by the Budget Committee. He asked about the behavioral specialist position that was not filled. He asked if there was a decision that the position is not needed.

Mr. Bourque indicated that the position was difficult to fill and it was decided to fill the position with a psychologist.

Mr. Spencer commented that there was a \$30,000 technology purchase for which eRate funds were used. He asked where those funds came from. Mr. Bourque commented they were eRate funds.

Mrs. Couture indicated that she knows the district did not take advantage of any opportunities to use eRate funds. She noted she is not familiar with how eRate works.

Mr. Spencer asked if there will be \$30,000 in the budget that will not be spent. Mr. Bourque indicated that the eRate funds are for technology purchases outside of budgeted items. He offered to provide clarification.

Mrs. Couture mentioned that the district may have to hold a public hearing to accept eRate funds.

Mr. Bourque reported at the last Board meeting it was mentioned that the Budget Committee will receive a group of budgets ahead of time in order to start formulating questions.

- **Budget Committee Actions**

- **4150.2 Information Technology**

Mrs. Couture asked if Mr. Byron would like to address Mr. Pascucci's question.

Mr. Byron commented that there were questions regarding Cisco maintenance and NETAPP and suggested Mr. Brunelle address those first.

Mr. Brunelle commented that the question was if the cost for Cisco maintenance will occur every year. He clarified that is the cost for the next three years. He explained that the existing

maintenance expires in 2016 and this is the rate for an additional three years. He noted in the past we had other equipment that was not covered by maintenance, which is included in the cost. Mr. Brunelle indicated the contract is extending to 2018.

Mr. Brunelle commented that NETAPP is the storage unit that holds all data. He explained when it was purchased it three years ago the cost included all hardware and software. He noted this cost is for an additional three years. Mr. Brunelle reported that VMWare maintenance, if renewed, will extend to 2018 as well.

Mrs. Douglas asked if the cost is higher because it is for three years as opposed to one year. Mr. Brunelle indicated that with VMWare we were paying annually and this is a one time payment for three years. He explained in three years the equipment we purchased will be 7 years old and we will assess it and revisit at that time.

Mrs. Douglas asked if the five computer upgrades are part of a general cycle. Mr. Brunelle commented that is the case and explained that there are five computers each year that have to be refreshed out.

Mrs. Douglas commented that the Telephone and Data line shows a cost to date of \$22,600. She asked if costs have been coming in lower. Mr. Brunelle indicated that there are still four months remaining to be billed. He noted that includes all data services.

Mrs. Couture suggested Mr. Pascucci's questions be addressed.

Referring to the IT Manager position, Mr. Pascucci asked if this is a new position or a contracted service. He commented he watched the May 11 meeting of the Board of Selectmen and tried to better understand. He asked for clarification.

Mr. Byron indicated Mr. Brunelle is a contractor and provides services to the town. He noted he does not receive a stipend or wages. He commented the minutes of the meeting are accurate. Mr. Byron noted the overall document is the contract the town has with Mr. Brunelle and offered to provide the contract to the Budget Committee.

Mrs. Couture commented that she sent the Budget Committee the minutes from our meeting and the Board of Selectmen meeting. She believes that this is a contract for services. She indicated the question was raised in the May 11 Board of Selectmen meeting and clarified in the May 18 minutes.

Mr. Pascucci questioned if any new position can be called a contract.

Mrs. Couture indicated there are definitions of a contractor. She commented if the Board of Selectmen would like to provide the contract to the Committee, we would like to see it.

Mr. Brown provided copies of the contract between the town and Mr. Brunelle.

Mr. Byron reviewed the contract and indicated the contract is an agreement between the Town of Litchfield and Mr. Brunelle who is clearly identified as the provider of those services. Section 2.0 reflects that the compensation is \$1,000 per month for providing services. This payment is not based on an hourly rate, salary or stipend. Section 3.0 defines the services and requires that Mr. Brunelle ensure the systems are running properly. He noted the foregoing terms represent the entire agreement between the town and the provider. Mr. Byron indicated that the agreement was drafted by town counsel, who provides that Mr. Brunelle is not an employee, but an independent contractor. He noted the contract clearly states the compensation is not a stipend, wages or salary.

Mr. Pascucci commented it is a paycheck from the town. Mr. Byron indicated all providers are paid by check.

Mr. Pascucci commented we are trying hard to make something fit. He indicated it may not be important to the Budget Committee how it is paid, but based on the warrant [regarding new positions] they need voter approval. He noted it matters if this is or is not a new position. Mr. Pascucci commented that a contract means the provider is insured and provides their own Workers Compensation insurance, a service is provided, an invoice is created and a check is sent to the provider. He indicated if it is an employee, the employee is told when and where to provide services and the employer pays the insurance and taxes. Mr. Pascucci commented it matters by way of the warrant only.

Mrs. Couture clarified that warrant article was a school district article and does not mean that is the way it has to happen. She indicated we already have a budget line for contracted services for this type of situation. She suggested if someone has an issue with the contractor, that person should address the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Pascucci commented he is concerned about how it applies to the warrant article. He indicated he deals with employees and has a lawyer and the clear definition of a contractor is that they have to be insured, provide an invoice for services and be a registered contractor.

Mrs. Couture reminded Mr. Pascucci his question was if this was a contracted service or new position and that has been clarified.

Mrs. Douglas commented that this is a slippery slope and that next year the district can say the math tutor is a contracted service.

Mrs. Couture indicated the district has people that are contracted servicers.

Mrs. Douglas asked why the math tutor was placed on the warrant. Mrs. Couture indicated they needed the position and tried to be upfront about it being an employee.

Mr. Pascucci commented anyone can call it whatever they want, but the criteria is important.

Mrs. Couture if a Committee member has a concern with the way the town or district pays contractors or employees that is a school or town issue and not a Budget Committee issue.

Mrs. Douglas commented it is about consistency. She stated she is unable to reconcile why the math tutor position was treated one way and this position is treated another way.

Mr. Pascucci commented if this were a warrant article he believes everyone in this room would vote in its favor.

MOTION: by Mr. Pascucci

Move to approve the Information Technology budget as \$97,140

SECOND: by Mr. Keating

Mrs. Couture reminded Mr. Pascucci that the Budget Committee at this point only votes on changes to the budgets and votes on the bottom line in January.

Mr. Pascucci commented last year Mr. Byron recommended we budget much on equipment maintenance that has not been used. He asked if some of that line can be reduced and encumbered for next year since it is in the same line.

Mrs. Couture indicated that would be a decision the Board of Selectmen would make.

Mr. Byron commented \$54,000 was budgeted last year and we have come forward with a request this year of \$12,000 and \$6,000 for the services of a contractor in the event Mr. Brunelle is out of town.

Mrs. Couture suggested Mr. Pascucci is asking if the town can pay anything forward to help alleviate next year's budget.

Mr. Byron indicated the Board of Selectmen can consider that.

Mr. Spencer commented there is no reason to encumber funds because if it is not spent it goes in the fund balance and the Board of Selectmen make the decision to use part of the fund balance to offset the budget.

Mr. Byron noted we normally use \$100,000 - \$200,000 a year to do so.

Mrs. Couture indicated that is why the Budget Committee chose to save the final votes for January because the town can look at what is remaining closer to the end of the year to consider paying items forward.

Mr. Byron commented that when that had been suggested the Budget Committee had mixed reactions. He indicated that if the Board of Selectmen do use current year money for the next year's budget it will generate changes in the budget that were viewed in the past as last minute changes.

Mrs. Couture repeated that is why the Budget Committee waits until January to vote the bottom line so that those types of changes are not met with angst or confusion.

Mrs. Couture asked if there are any changes to the 2016 IT budget. There were no motions.

Mr. Pascucci withdrew his motion. Mr. Keating withdrew his second.

7. BUDGET REVIEW – TOWN

● 4311.1 Road Agent

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Road Agent budget with a total bottom line of \$59,214. He noted there are additional requirements for storm water management.

Mr. Brown commented that he asked the EPA how we are supposed to budget for engineering services if we do not know what that number will be. He indicated Litchfield will most likely not need the services of larger towns/ cities.

Mr. Pascucci asked what the EPA requirements are.

Mr. Byron explained the EPA is trying to update their system. He noted their concern is the contamination of runoff water [from rain or melting snow] in the drains by hazardous agents (e.g. oil, antifreeze) on roadways where drains are located. The drains are numbered so we know where they go. He indicated they are requiring that the drains be treated prior to water runoff. Mr. Byron commented the EPA has a new plan that could cost municipalities hundreds of thousands of dollars. He noted that the town has been doing some of this under the old system. He indicated that they have not yet issued the final document, which will be available sometime in 2016. Mr. Byron indicated we will need to budget something to prepare for their requirements.

Mr. Spencer commented that regardless of their plan, there will be some type of timeframe for towns/cities to comply. He asked why we do not wait.

Mr. Byron commented at that point we have to do something and we will not have any funds. He indicated that the town is trying to be prepared if the requirements are outrageous. He suggested the money can be put into a separate fund if the Budget Committee so desires.

Mr. Spencer commented that he does not believe the new regulations will force towns/cities to complete the requirements right away.

Mr. Brown explained when the document is released in April the first step for the town will be to file a notice of intent. He indicated this is not a one page document and requires a consultant to

prepare the document that states how you plan addressing a plan over the next five years. He believes the intent document is required to be filed in October 2016.

Mr. Spencer disagreed with the \$30,000 cost budgeted. He suggested budgeting \$15,000.

Mr. Pascucci commented that the EPA's plan could bankrupt towns. He indicated there will be pushbacks and delays. He suggested delaying as long as possible.

Mr. Spencer asked if \$13,000 is a good number that was budgeted under Line 310, Consulting Engineering Services.

Mr. Brown commented it is what we use for proposed road projects and the number has been used in past budgets.

Mr. Byron commented that Mr. Pinciario uses it for engineering to be done in the next budget. He indicated this money will be partially used for engineering next year and for putting together cost estimates for the 2017 budget.

Mrs. Douglas commented that to date approximately \$3,100 has been expended and there are two months left in the year. She does not believe the remaining \$10,000 will all be expended. Mr. Brown commented that Mr. Pinciario will have projects in the proposed budget and will use the engineer for projects to put out to bid the first of the year, which allows him to start the projects in the spring.

Mrs. Couture asked for verification at the next meeting that Mr. Pinciario would be using the \$10,000 to prepare for 2016 projects.

Mrs. Douglas commented last year 3,200 gallons of propane were budgeted. She asked why 5,000 gallons is proposed next year.

Mr. Brown indicated he is still working on those numbers and will update actual numbers.

Mrs. Douglas commented that \$4,400 has been expended to date and asked how many tanks will be filled by the end of the year. She also asked about billing for electricity.

Mr. Brown indicated he is still working on the electricity numbers. He noted he received communication from PSNH that they have their projections for transmission costs and delivery costs. He commented that stranded costs are in litigation at this time.

- **4312.1 Highways & Streets**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Highways & Streets budget with a total bottom line of \$624,435. He noted there was a question regarding salaries at last week's meeting.

Mr. Brown provided a list of salary changes for 2015 and a copy of the town personnel policy to the Budget Committee. He commented he went through all employees that had salary changes, which he sorted by dollar and percent change to determine major changes. He indicated the reason for the changes was that town did a salary study and wanted to go to a merit based system. Mr. Brown noted that it begins with a competitive start rate, mid-range rate, and end rate (as illustrated in the personnel policy).

Mrs. Douglas asked how much further will salaries increase. She commented that she supported the change last year, but is now seeing very large increases. She indicated that she is questioning whether she will support the second phase. She asked how much more is the town considering for those who have received a significant increase.

Mr. Byron explained the salaries in the budget are reflective of where the employees are today in terms of salaries. He noted there should be an adjustment to move them in the range based on performance. He indicated some employees whose salaries increased were brought up to the minimum start rate of the wage plan.

Mrs. Douglas commented that she knows that the significant increases are employees who may be on the bottom of the range and there may be another increase.

Mr. Spencer asked if the two 30 hour per week workers are budgeted at \$14.47 per hour. Mr. Byron indicated he was not sure as the amount budgeted may include time the road agent spends as well, or it could include a heavy duty truck driver.

Mr. Spencer commented he would like to know how the total for the wages line was calculated.

Mr. Byron noted that there was an increase in the contractor services line as the driver hourly rate increased.

Mrs. Couture asked if clarification could be provided for the workmen's wages line and the contractor services.

Mr. Pascucci asked about the increase for salt. Mr. Byron indicated that Mr. Pinciario was told salt cost increase \$3 per ton.

Mr. Pascucci asked if the town is projecting another above normal winter as an additional 200 tons of salt has been budgeted.

Mr. Brown indicated that Mr. Pinciario is concerned that this budget has been reduced over the years and would like to have this budget at a reasonable level. He commented last year every department in the state ran out of salt. He noted Mr. Pinciario would like to be sure there is enough tonnage available.

Mrs. Douglas asked about the tree removal budget line and if the town is planning on removing trees from now to the end of the year. Mr. Brown commented that he is sure Mr. Pinciario has identified some trees to be removed for safety. He indicated that Mr. Pinciario is most likely holding off on some of these lines to cover for overages in others.

Mr. Spencer asked why the pavement striping line has increased. Mr. Brown indicated much of that line is budgeted for restriping Albuquerque as it can cost \$8,000-\$10,000 per year for just that road. He noted the remaining cost would be for addressing stop lines, turn signals, etc. He commented every year Mr. Pinciario hopes to complete $\frac{1}{4}$ of the town.

Mr. Pascucci commented hiring a contractor could be much more efficient.

Mr. Spencer asked why the budget for road sweeping increased. Mr. Byron commented the contract could have increased, but he will get the answer.

Mr. Spencer asked if what is budgeted for Line 573, Miscellaneous, is a good number. Mr. Brown commented that is for doing minor repairs to roads. He noted you will most likely see temporary fixes on roadways.

Mr. Spencer asked if Line 635 includes trucks we own and fire trucks. Mr. Brown indicated it is for highway trucks and whatever heavy equipment we use in the off season as well. He noted we will have the actual usage from 2014 and an update on where we are for 2015.

Mr. Byron commented that the 2014 expenditures should be a normal year because our winter did not start until January 2015. He indicated that the effect of a bad winter is evident in the expenditures from January to March 2015.

Mr. Brown reported that he is working with Mr. Pinciario and the Board of Selectmen on a vehicle lease to replace the town pick-up truck. He noted there will be a number in Line 761, Vehicle Lease, the next time the Committee sees the budget.

Mrs. Couture commented the warrant article regarding lease purchases was approved this year.

Mr. Pascucci asked if the discussion about multi-year leases can be started. Mrs. Couture indicated that was already clarified.

- **4191.1 Planning Board**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Planning Board budget with a total bottom line of \$53,930.

Mrs. Couture asked why the fees for the NRPC have decreased. Mr. Byron indicated that he assumed they decided to reduce some of the hours because they are not needed or because there is no plan to have any significant articles proposed for zoning.

Mrs. Douglas asked why Line 555, Public Notices and Ads, has increased. Mr. Brown indicated that currently the town is working on updating sections of the master plan and it is anticipated that there will be a need for additional public hearings in 2016.

- **4191.3 Zoning Board**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Zoning Board budget with a total bottom line of \$596. He noted there has been no increase or decrease to that budget.

- **4194.1 General Government Facilities**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 General Government Facilities budget with a total bottom line of \$96,851.

Mrs. Douglas referred to Line 396, County Prison Community Service Program, and asked if that program still exists. Mr. Byron indicated the program was halted for one year and restarted again.

- **4195 Cemeteries**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Cemeteries budget with a total bottom line of \$7,483.

Mr. Spencer asked why the Prisoner Program was budgeted in the Cemeteries budget.

Mr. Byron indicated Cemeteries is separate from the town. He noted the work within the cemeteries is paid for out of this account.

Mrs. Couture asked why more was expended in 2014. Mr. Byron indicated that fences and tombs were addressed.

- **4415 Health Agencies**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Health Agencies budget with a total bottom line of \$15,167. He noted that the warrant article was successfully approved last year and there was no discussion on it at Deliberative Session.

Mr. Pascucci asked what was taken out of the Health Agencies budget and placed in the Police budget. Mr. Byron indicated the Child Advocate was placed in the police budget. He explained the Child Advocate is the person who is the expert on sexual abuse.

Mr. Spencer asked about the court appointed advocate. Mr. Byron indicated that is an organization that recruits and trains people to advocate for abused children.

Mr. Pascucci suggested asking the Police Chief if this is just as important as the child advocate. He noted this has been in a warrant article for the past two years. He indicated he made a motion to reduce it from the budget and it failed.

Mr. Byron commented that the child advocacy included in the police budget is for the Granite State Children's Alliance as those are the people that do the interviewing.

Mr. Pascucci believes that the health agencies should be on the warrant as this is charity and should continue to be in the hands of the voters. He was confident the article would be approved.

Mr. Spencer commented in years past the Board of Selectmen would decide what to put in the budget and which agencies to fund.

Mrs. Couture indicated these agencies are based on the services they provide in the community.

Mr. Pascucci suggested asking the police chief if the court appointed advocate is important.

Mr. Byron indicated that the police have nothing to do with this agency.

Mr. Keating explained that the advocate is appointed by the court, such as when a family is in dire straits and volunteers are trained to deal with this type of situation. He noted it is a civil matter, such as a guardian ad litem.

Mr. Pascucci believes Health Agencies should be included in the warrant and commented he will make a motion at that point.

- **4220.9 Fire Hydrants**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Fire Hydrants budget with a total bottom line of \$296,128.

Mr. Spencer commented that he reviewed the attachment for this budget and what was spent last year using the same numbers, and is unable to match the amount for this budget. He believes there was a separate tariff for a service charge for this year that we should not see next year.

- **4241.2 Code Enforcement**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Code Enforcement budget with a total bottom line of \$78,500. He noted that \$274 was budgeted for Fire Inspector I certification.

- **4411.1 Health**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Health budget with a total bottom line of \$1,646.

Mr. Spencer commented that seminars/conventions were not attended last year and asked if it is planned this year. Mr. Brown indicated this is a placeholder.

- **4611.2 Conservation**

Mr. Byron presented the 2016 Conservation budget with a total bottom line of \$1,760.

- **Budget Committee Actions**

- **4130.1 Board of Selectmen (Executive)**

Mrs. Couture asked if there were any motions for the Executive budget. There were no motions.

- **4130.3 Town Meeting**

Mr. Byron indicated there was a question about provisions at elections at the last meeting.

Mr. Brown indicated the intent of this line item is for food and beverages for workers at the polls. He commented we plan to provide refreshments at each of the four elections next year.

There were no motions on the Town Meeting budget.

- **4140.1 Town Clerk**

Mrs. Douglas asked if the cost budgeted for printer cartridges in Line 622 is realistic. She noted that \$590 was spent in 2014.

Mr. Brown commented this caught his attention and he spoke to the staff. He noted the state supplies the town with two new printers, but does not provide the toner, which is very expensive. He indicated the expenditures to date is driving the estimate. He commented these printers print the state forms (e.g. registrations).

There were no motions.

- **4150.1 Accounting**

Mr. Brown indicated there was a question on mileage. He commented we estimated 260 bank trips at \$9.20 per trip. He explained we reviewed it and multiplied one trip per day (5 days) at 52 weeks per year and reduced the number of trips to 250. He noted we reduced the treasurer's trips to 24.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce line 810, Mileage and Tolls, by \$216 for a new total of \$2,745

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mr. Pascucci commented that electronic transfer should be used for bank deposits.

Mr. Byron commented while electronic transfer of funds makes sense, the town not only receives funds electronically, but also receives checks and cash. He indicated we have no choice but to go to the bank to deposit them.

Mr. Pascucci commented that checks can be electronically deposited by taking a picture of them. He noted if the Board of Selectmen decides to use current technology it could save the town money.

Mr. Byron indicated in 2008 this town suffered a loss of \$212,000 and we made the decision we do not want money hanging around the town hall.

VOTE: 7-1-0, with Mr. Byron opposing
The motion carried.

- **4150.4 Tax Collector**

There were no motions.

- **4153.1 Legal Expenses**

Mr. Byron reported there are no expenses in the 2016 budget for the pipeline.

Mr. Spencer asked about funds that were spent in 2015.

Mr. Brown indicated the 2015 legal account budget has not been charged for the pipeline.

There were no motions.

- **4197.1 Advertising & Regional Association**

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce line 560, Dues and Subscriptions, by \$6,715 for a new total of \$6,284

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mrs. Douglas believes the dues for the NHMA are inappropriate. She does not feel Litchfield needs representation by the organization since the town has its own representatives and its own legal counsel. She believes the benefits are not worth the fees and it is not the most efficient use of taxpayer money since the Budget Committee does not have open access to the NHMA.

Mrs. Couture indicated the Budget Committee does have access to legal advice by the NHMA; however, the request and information has to go through the Chair.

Mr. Pascucci commented that last week Mr. Byron stated the benefits the NHMA offered. He stated one of the members of the Board of Selectmen mentioned it was a benefit not used for this town. He indicated the main purpose of this group is lobbying and he does not see the benefit.

Mr. Byron indicated every town and city in the state is a member of the NHMA and they receive good work for benefits. He commented good information is provided, as well as monthly magazines that discuss current government issues. He noted the NHMA provides excellent training and legislative updates. Mr. Byron indicated they do lobby for necessary benefits for the town and cities to make sure we do not lose revenues. He recommended continued participation makes sense.

Mrs. Couture agreed that it is a great value for the cost. She commented that she would refer to what they do as advocating when an issue arises to impact communities.

Mr. Vaillancourt asked how much Litchfield receives for meals/rooms revenues.

Mr. Byron explained there is a House/Senate Committee to look at the meals/rooms tax distribution. He noted the new plan is that the distribution has to be in proportion with what the town contributes. He indicated the NHMA is working to make sure that formula does not change.

VOTE: 2-6-0, with Mrs. Douglas and Mr. Pascucci in support
The motion failed.

- **4316.3 Street Lighting**

There were no motions.

- **4445.2 Welfare**

Mr. Spencer asked if he could motion to reduce the bottom line.

Mr. Byron commented that the Budget Committee has to tell the Board of Selectmen which lines to reduce.

Mr. Pascucci commented the obligation and responsibility of this Committee is not to take reductions out of these lines, but to take it out of the bottom line.

Mr. Byron indicated it is the Budget Committee's responsibility to assemble the budget.

Mr. Pascucci commented he wants to know the rules and live by them.

Mrs. Couture indicated that if a member feels a line needs to be adjusted then vote that line and vote the bottom line in January.

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to reduce Line 824, Housing, by \$5,000 for a new total of \$2,500

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mr. Spencer indicated that a little more than half of what is proposed is what has been spent consecutively for two years.

VOTE: 5-3-0

The motion carried.

- **4583.1 Patriotic Purposes**

There were no motions.

- **4723.1 Debt Service**

There were no motions.

8. MEMBER INPUT/OLD BUSINESS

Referring to the issue of the bottom line and the rule for voting, Mr. Pascucci commented that he notices a difference in the method of making reductions to the school district budget and the town budget. He indicated that when the Budget Committee wanted to make reductions to the school district budget, the district accepts and allocates a bottom line reduction. Mr. Pascucci noted that he is now hearing the town would like the Committee to reduce the line to which the reduction applies.

Mr. Spencer indicated it depends on the account as there are some accounts you cannot direct where to allocate and some you can.

Mr. Brown commented that as a Budget Committee you would want to justify your bottom line reduction.

Mr. Byron commented that you can vote to reduce the bottom line, the Board of Selectmen makes changes to that budget, and the Budget Committee says we over spent the line to which we applied the reduction. He noted that the Board of Selectmen have to assign the reduction somewhere.

Mr. Pascucci commented that the Board of Selectmen reconfigures many line items.

Mrs. Couture clarified they can do that after the vote.

Mr. Pascucci commented he has been on the Committee for a handful of years. He indicated this budget has been refined and become more in line with what is being proposed than in years past [in his opinion]. He commented through collaborative effort between the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee things have improved. Mr. Pascucci noted there may be some contention over his beliefs where some budget items are concerned (e.g. contracts and the way they are written). He commented when he speaks on an issue he is not trying to say the Board of Selectmen are wrong, but just that he likes to define things. Mr. Pascucci indicated that two years ago one lease ended and another followed it and that was budgeted as an existing lease. He suggested that it should just have been budgeted as a new lease. Mr. Pascucci requested the discussion on wording be brought up as it is important to be accurate.

Mrs. Couture agreed with Mr. Pascucci's comments that the budget is clean and refined. She commented that she has been watching the School Board meetings and was pleased to see the Superintendent is using three year averages in budgeting. She anticipates it will be a much cleaner budget.

9. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

10. ADJOURN

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

DRAFT

16

Move to adjourn

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

VOTE: 7-0-0

The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 22, 2015

Recorded by: Michele E. Flynn, Recording Secretary