

DRAFT

Minutes of the Litchfield Budget Committee Hearing Held on September 24, 2015

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a budget hearing on Thursday, September 24, 2015 at Campbell High School, One Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

PRESENT: K Douglas (Vice Chair), C Pascucci, B Spencer, R Keating, R Peeples, F Bryon (Selectmen's Representative)

Absent: C Couture (Chair), B Bourque (School Board Representative), D Vaillancourt

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Douglas 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

The School Board representative could not attend so there will be no school report.

4. REVIEW/ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

• August 27, 2015

MOTION: by Mr. Pascucci

Motion to approve the minutes of August 27, 2015

SECOND: by Mr. Keating

VOTE: 5-0-0

The motion carried.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Douglas reported that there was some information from Mr. Byron regarding the status of the State budget.

6. REPORTS

• TOWN BUSINESS

o General Update

Mr. Byron reported that the new Town Administrator has started and encouraged Budget Committee members to come and meet him. He informed the Committee that today the engine in the Highway Department pick-up truck broke down. He indicated that the quote from the Ford dealership to replace the engine is \$11,000. Mr. Byron noted the Board of Selectmen have not yet met to discuss this.

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Mr. Byron commented in 2013 HB342 required municipalities to report the working hours of all retirees. A \$25/day penalty was put in place for failure to report the data to the State. Mr. Byron indicated that the town has been reporting all the data; however, we transposed some numbers and now the State is saying we owe them \$3,400 in penalties. He noted the town is appealing the charges. As a legislator, Mr. Byron explained that he filed a bill to correct this situation in the event a municipality makes a mistake in calculation. He commented the town has 30 days to appeal. He indicated that he wrote a letter as a State Representative on behalf of the town and sent it to the town so they can use it to appeal the NHRS. Mr. Byron explained this came about as a result of an audit by the NHRS in which they discovered the mistake and decided because it occurred many months ago it compiled penalties.

Mr. Byron reported the Library has applied to the Board of Selectmen to request the town supply money so they can bring their employees onto the town salary plan. He indicated the Board of Selectmen said it is up to the Trustees if they want to adopt the salary plan and that they should include it in their budget. He commented that the Trustees have concerns and asked to meet with the Town Administrator.

Mr. Spencer commented that the Library stands on their own.

Mr. Peeples commented the Budget Committee has no control over their budget.

Mr. Byron indicated the Budget Committee has some control. He commented we were advised by counsel that the Library needed to stand on their own.

Mr. Spencer asked if Mr. Byron had any updates on the status of the study committee for the default.

Mr. Byron indicated that he has not heard anything and that he passed the response he received from one of the members of that committee onto the Budget Committee. He offered to follow up with that member. Mr. Byron reported the state budget is now approved and is no longer on a continuing resolution. The only change was that SB9, an additional bill to handle negotiation points, included raises for state employees. That change was paid for out of the money that was saved when we were under continuing resolution.

Mr. Peeples asked about the business profits tax.

Mr. Byron indicated that tax will accelerate down. He commented that the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee reviewed it and Mr. Byron and others looked through it and feel confident the taxes will drop on businesses. He indicated he is waiting to hear information on the rooms and meals tax.

Mr. Spencer asked about the final outcome on the state education aid.

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Mr. Byron commented the information was sent in an email and state education aid will be funded at 96%.

Referring back to the Highway Department truck, Mr. Keating asked if the town has to go to the Ford dealership to get the work done.

Mr. Byron indicated we can go anywhere, but the Board of Selectmen have to discuss it and decide if they want to replace the engine.

Mr. Spencer thanked Mr. Byron for keeping the Budget Committee abreast of legislative dealings in Concord.

Mr. Byron commented that he will look at the LSR's, which are bills waiting to be drafted, to see if there are any that impact the district or municipality. He reported that there was an increase in charter school funding.

Mr. Byron asked if the Budget Committee has released a schedule for budget reviews and sequence. He commented that the Board of Selectmen have to work on some of the budgets, but will provide many of them after the Board of Selectmen review them on Monday evening. He asked if the Budget Committee would like a general presentation on the budget or to receive the budgets and review them.

Mr. Peebles indicated he would like an overview with highlights of major changes.

Mr. Pascucci asked if the Budget Committee will begin reviewing budgets on October 1.

Mrs. Douglas indicated she believes the Committee may not be ready to review them, but can hear the overview presentation.

Mr. Byron indicated the Board of Selectmen will review the budgets on Monday and provide an outline of changes along with the budgets.

Mr. Spencer asked if the Board of Selectmen have discussed the budget cap.

Mr. Byron indicated that the Board has not discussed it, but the warrant article is specific to the RSA as to what you are going to write. He suspects it will be modified at Deliberative Session.

Mr. Pascucci commented the Board of Selectmen have to determine an official number.

Mr. Byron indicated a number will be provided, but he is not sure what that number will be.

o RSA 32:22; Review of Expenditures

The Budget Committee receives the expenditures weekly and monthly.

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- **SCHOOL BUSINESS**
 - **General Updates**

There was no school report.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

8. MEMBER INPUT/OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Byron informed the Budget Committee that commencing on October 30 until November 17 he will be out of the country. He noted the Board of Selectmen will appoint a replacement.

9. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

10. ADJOURN

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to adjourn

SECOND: by Mr. Peeples

VOTE: 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 1, 2015

Recorded by: Michele E. Flynn, Recording Secretary