

**Minutes of the  
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting  
Held on May 24, 2018**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, May 24, 2018 at Litchfield Town Hall, 2 Liberty Way, Litchfield, NH 03052.

**PRESENT:** C Couture (Chair), K Douglas (Vice Chair), J Martin, B Hodgkins, R Meyers (School Board Representative), J Brunelle (Selectmen Representative)

Absent: N Fordey, G Lambert, J Bourque

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

● **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no community input.

**3. REVIEW / ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

● **February 10, 2018**

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Douglas

*Move to approve the minutes of February 10, 2018*

**SECOND:** by Mrs. Couture

**VOTE: 2-0-4, with Mr. Hodgkins, Mrs. Martin, Mr. Brunelle and Mr. Meyers abstaining**  
**The motion carried.**

● **April 12, 2018**

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Douglas

*Move to approve the minutes of April 12, 2018*

**SECOND:** by Mr. Brunelle

**VOTE: 5-0-1, with Mr. Hodgkins abstaining**  
**The motion carried.**

**4. CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Couture mentioned that she received financial, year end funds, food service, enrollment reports from the district.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

● **2018-2019 Budget Calendar**

Mrs. Couture provided a list of Budget Committee meetings for the 2018-2019 year to the Committee members.

- **Live Streaming**

Mrs. Couture commented that there is an option for live streaming of meetings at Town Hall where we will be meeting. She noted the meetings are also recorded and posted to You Tube. The Budget Committee discussed live streaming venues and what that would mean for the Committee. She checked RSA 91-A:3, which states that *'Any person shall be permitted to use recording devices, including, but not limited to, tape recorders, cameras, and videotape equipment, at such meetings'*. She added that the RSA also states that the official minutes of a meeting *shall be treated as permanent records of any public body, or any subordinate body thereof, without exception.*

Mrs. Couture indicated that she went to the Right to Know trainings offered by the NHMA and spoke to attorneys regarding the live broadcast. She noted that the attorneys said recordings are not part of the Budget Committee's official record and that the minutes are the official record.

- **Bylaws**

Mrs. Couture believes that language should be added to the Budget Committee Bylaws to clarify what constitutes the official record for the Budget Committee. She explained that she began with the RSA and drafted the following language for the bylaws:

*Section VI Conduct of Meetings*

*New Section:*

*H. Electronic Recording of Meetings*

*RSA91-A:2 II States that in part that, "Any person shall be permitted to use recording devices, including, but not limited to, tape recorders, cameras, and videotape equipment, at such meetings."*

*The Budget Committee does not record its meetings. Other individuals or organizations such as the Town of Litchfield Cable Committee may record, broadcast or live stream official Budget Committee meetings on public access stations, YouTube, Facebook and other social media. The Budget Committee is not responsible for the dissemination, broadcast or retention of this media. The official record of the Budget Committee is the minutes. Any questions, comments or information that arises from media broadcasts may be taken up at a subsequent official meeting at the discretion of the Budget Committee.*

Mrs. Couture indicated that comments and questions can be taken up at a subsequent meeting.

Mr. Meyer mentioned that two districts in NH have received OCR letters reflecting that if the town posts past meeting videos they need to be ADA compliant with captioning.

Mr. Brunelle commented that would mean that Cable would have to pull all the meeting videos.

Mrs. Couture indicated that is not for the Budget Committee to address. She noted it is a Town/Cable Committee responsibility.

With reference to the topic discussion, Mr. Brunelle indicated the School Board had similar concerns and were concerned about comments or the recording becoming part of the meeting record. He commented that state law defines minutes are the official record of the meetings. He mentioned there are long term archives on You Tube.

Mrs. Couture commented when she got involved in local government she would sit in the audience as a citizen and record the meetings and send them back to Hudson.

Mr. Brunelle indicated according to the RSA anyone can come in a record a meeting. He mentioned that close captioning is a service offered by the Town Cable Committee.

Mrs. Couture indicated if the proposed new language is acceptable it cannot become official until the next meeting. She noted it can be accepted now and voted on at the next meeting for adoption.

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Douglas

***Move to accept the language proposed in the new section of the bylaws entitled Section VI, Conduct of Meetings***

**SECOND:** by Mr. Meyers

**VOTE: 6-0-0**

**The motion carried.**

*The Budget Committee will vote to adopt the new language into the bylaws at their next meeting.*

## **6. REPORTS**

- **Town Business**
  - **Fire Station Update**

Mr. Brunelle reported that the Town received final approval for the bond. He noted that they have the permit and that grinding and clearing of site has begun. He indicated that construction on the structure will begin in July.

- **Financial Update**

Mr. Brunelle reported that fuel costs are becoming concerning as prices are increasing; the new officer will be fully trained and certified by September; negotiations for the Police Department CBA will begin soon for new contract years; Highway Department projects are completed and expected to be \$20,000 under budget; the MRI DPW Feasibility Study will be starting May 22 and will be finalized in three months.

Mr. Brunelle indicated tax bills will be sent out and that the 2018 tax base is not finalized until the first tax bill goes out for July 1. He reported that the town is looking at a \$15M increase per assessment (tax base), which is more value for the town.

Mr. Hodgkins asked if that would mean more revenue coming into the town.

Mrs. Couture indicated that the value of your home may increase, but your taxes may not increase. Mrs. Douglas added that it is revenue neutral.

Mr. Brunelle reported the 2017 audit is almost complete.

Mrs. Douglas asked if the PFOA issue is complete.

Mr. Brunelle commented there may be a plan to shut down all the wells, but there is still much discussion. He noted the town pushed their agenda, but has not received a response to date. He indicated homeowners have the option to keep their wells, but the State would prefer all wells are shut down.

- **School Business**
  - **Financial Update**

Mrs. Couture mentioned there have been many updates over the last month, such as financial updates, security update, superintendent salary update and enrollment.

Mr. Meyers reported the district is expecting an unassigned fund balance estimate of \$583,184. He reported that items committed to be taken out of the fund balance are:

- Facilities and Maintenance Capital Reserve Transfer (warrant article 4) \$50,000
- Full Day Kindergarten costs (warrant article 2) \$102,670.

He provided a list of items identified to be purchased with year end funds approved by the School Board:

- School Security (2017 Warrant Article 5 continuing appropriation) \$17,638, which is a carry-over of the prior year warrant article for fencing (purchase order already generated);
- District-wide Strategic Items: Learning Commons Initiative for all schools \$43,219, consists of
  - GMS \$ 9,570
  - LMS \$24,206
  - CHS \$ 9,443
- GMS Furniture/Equipment Replacement \$10,489
- Building Security / Restricted Access: \$53,616, consists of:
  - CHS Entry Way Reconfiguration \$19,497
  - LMS Card Readers \$13,999
  - GMS Internal Cameras \$7,308
  - LMS Internal Cameras \$10,692
  - CHS Internal Cameras \$14,616
  - Installation / Line Runs \$21,000
- Student and Staff Health/Safety: Dust Collection System (Wood Shop) \$72,056

Total Assigned Fund Balance: \$230,514

Mrs. Douglas asked if the \$102,670 was factored into the warrant article amount. Mr. Meyers indicated he will get more information.

Mrs. Douglas commented she does not want to spend less on the portable classrooms than was approved by the voters.

Mr. Meyers reported the dust collection system in the CHS wood shop is out of OSHA compliance for environmental and sound level. He commented that the district will have to go back to get another estimate.

Mrs. Couture commented as we get closer to the end of the year and purchase orders get closed out, the unassigned balance will increase.

#### o **GMS Security Update**

Mr. Meyers reported that the district received approval of the grant for the funding of the GMS secure vestibule. He indicated the grant is 80% of the cost and that the district will provide the remaining 20% out of the Capital Reserve Fund. He noted the windows to the left of the main entrance will be part of the vestibule and the main doors will remain locked with a magnetic lock system, which will be used for children to go out for recess.

Mrs. Douglas was concerned anyone can enter the building from the door that the students are exiting for recess.

Mr. Meyers indicated that is a risk when any door opens. He noted students will not be able to open the doors from the outside without the teachers using their proximity cards. He commented it will make the school safer and the vestibule will be in line with the main office and in sight of the main office.

Mrs. Douglas preferred that the main doors be eliminated and the vestibule be the only point of entry or exit at the front of the building.

Mr. Meyers indicated it would be more of a safety hazard with all those doors open when the students are exiting the building.

Mrs. Douglas commented that the teachers can man the doors when the students are exiting the building.

#### o **Superintendent Salary Update**

Mr. Meyers reported that the district will be in line with the budgeted salary (\$135,000) for the Superintendent on July 1.

Mr. Meyers reported that enrollment has not changed much since the prior month.

Mrs. Couture commented it has not changed much since the beginning of the year.

Mr. Meyers commented there is lower than expected student enrollment from the condos on Page Road.

Mrs. Douglas indicated that needs to be watched. Mr. Meyers indicated it has been discussed.

Mrs. Couture indicated enrollment projections have been done with October 1 numbers every year for 20 years. She noted that the NHSBA had provided projections for many years, but will not be providing them in the future. She asked how the projections will be done this fall.

Mr. Meyers commented that he has done a 10 year projection based on the state model.

Mrs. Couture indicated that the district has had them done by a neutral party because in the past when they were done internally there were concerns over the accuracy of the numbers. She noted that the district uses the 3 year weighted average in their projections.

Committee members discussed enrollment projections.

Mrs. Douglas asked about teacher negotiations. Mr. Meyers indicated discussions will begin in July.

## **7. MEMBER INPUT/ NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Hodgkins asked how he will receive information needed for the meetings.

Mrs. Couture indicated that as Chair she distributes all the information to members.

Mrs. Flynn mentioned that she created a Budget Committee Shared folder on the Town's Google Drive for Committee members to access information. She noted they just need to go to Google Drive and login to access the folder.

## **8. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

## **9. ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Douglas

***Move to adjourn the meeting.***

**SECOND:** by Mr. Brunelle

**VOTE: 6-0-0**

**The motion carried.**

**Next meeting: June 28, 2018 at Town Hall**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

**Recorded by:** Michele E. Flynn, Recording Secretary

**Approved:** June 28, 2018