

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD
2019 VOTER GUIDE AND SAMPLE BALLOT
Tuesday, March 12, 2019 from 7am to 7pm at Campbell High School Gymnasium
2019 Budget Information and Annual Report can be viewed at:
www.litchfieldnh.gov

EXPLANATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES

ARTICLE 2 - 2019 OPERATING BUDGET

The operating budget as recommended by the Budget Committee (7-1-0) and Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) is \$6,757,953. The Budget Committee proposed budget is \$44,708 above the default budget. Major increases in the proposed operating budget are the new Fire Station Bond payment \$258,960, wages and benefits for the new full-time police officer position approved last year \$84,828, Fire Department wages, training, equipment replacement and building operating costs due to the new station \$44,600, hydrants fees \$34,017, information technology \$10,200, general government buildings cost \$9,100 and union and non-union wage increases. If approved, the recommended operating budget represents a tax rate increase of \$0.08 per thousand dollars of assessed value or about \$28 increase to house valued at \$350,000.

ARTICLE 3 - POLICE CONTRACT SUMMARY

- 27 month agreement between the Town of Litchfield and Council 93 AFSCME
- Step increases and promotions will be based on merit / performance review
- 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment July 1, 2019
- 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment July 1, 2020
- Changed longevity incentive from 3% increase to base wage to annual stipend; same as non-union
 - 10+ years of service - \$500 annual stipend
 - 15+ years of service - \$750 annual stipend
 - 20+ years of service - \$1,000 annual stipend
- Reduced earned time maximum accruals and eliminated part-time employee buybacks
 - Hired before April 1, 2014 - reduced from 960 to 660 hours
 - Hired after April 1, 2014 - reduced from 660 to 500 hours
 - Hired after April 1, 2019 - reduced from 660 to 320 hours; same as non-union
- Estimated Increase in wages and benefits
 - 2019 - \$37,909
 - 2020 - \$24,942
 - 2021 - \$4,764
- Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)
- Recommended by Budget Committee (7-1-0)
- Estimated 2019 tax rate impact: \$0.04.

ARTICLE 4 - HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTH AGENCIES

This article proposes to create a different approach to support Human Services and Health Agencies that provide services to the Town of Litchfield by creating a review committee comprised of the Welfare Director, Health Officer and a Resident. Each year the Board of Selectmen receive multiple funding requests from various agencies. Over the past years, funding approved in the operating budget or by special warrant article. This approach will allow voters to determine an annual amount to be raised for this purpose. If funding is approved, the committee will recommend funding amounts to the Board of Selectmen based on community needs and demands. This article proposes to raise \$25,000 with an estimated tax rate impact of \$0.03. Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) and Budget Committee (6-2-0)

ARTICLE 5 - TOWN EARNED TIME ACCRUAL EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

The town's earned time accrual expendable trust fund was established in 2014 to cover costs of unused earned time for town union and non-union employees upon voluntary or involuntary separation from employment, retirement or annual "buybacks" in accordance with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement and Personnel Policy. The current balance of the fund is about \$57,000 and annual costs range from \$40k to \$60K per year. Currently, there are eight (8) employees eligible to retire which could cost approximately \$100,000. The total unfunded town liability as of December 31, 2018 is approximately \$275,000. This article will raise and appropriate \$50,000 from the town's unassigned fund balance. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact is \$0.00 and is recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) and Budget Committee (7-1-0).

ARTICLE 6 - TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

This article seeks to establish a Technology and Communication Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the purchase and repair of technology and communication equipment and software. The fund will allow the town to maintain communication equipment, software and hardware for day-to-day operations and safety purposes. This fund will be used for planned updates and emergency replacements. It is also intended to provide potential funding source for fire, police and highway radio communication equipment, financial software and other related technology, software and communication needs. If approved, \$50,000 will be raised and appropriated from the unassigned fund balance and the Board of Selectmen will be appointed as agents to expend. The estimated tax rate impact \$0.00 and is recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) and Budget Committee (8-0-0).

ARTICLE 7 - LAND PURCHASE

The Board of Selectmen negotiated the purchase of 2.52 acres of land on Hillcrest Road (Map 15, Lot 30) for \$90,000. The land abuts the Transfer / Recycling Facility and Highway Garage property. The primary purpose of this land acquisition is to make ingress and egress safety improvements at the intersection of Recycling Way and Hillcrest Road. Currently, residents, police cruisers, plow trucks, fire trucks and commercial trucks enter and exit the facility with limited sight distance of oncoming traffic. The intersection could be made safer with removal of trees, brush and a portion of the earth embankment on Hillcrest Road. The 2.52 acres could also be used for future expansion of operational needs of the Transfer / Recycling Facility and/or Highway Garage. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact is \$0.00. This article is recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) and Budget Committee (8-0-0)

MAP 15, LOT 30 HILLCREST ROAD



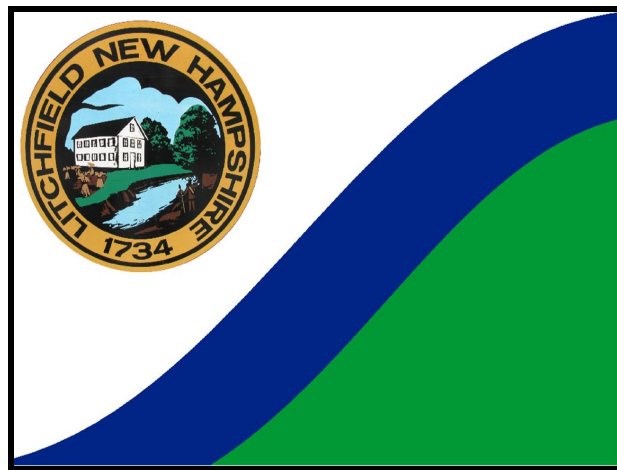
ARTICLE 8 - TOWN FLAG

This article is recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0). The Town of Litchfield does not have an official “Town Flag”. New Hampshire does not have laws specifying how towns adopt flags. This article would grant authority to the Board of Selectmen to adopt a town flag after conducting two (2) public hearings. The idea of a town flag for Litchfield was first presented to the Board of Selectmen on June 25, 2018 by Matthew Lepore. Mr. Lepore conducted significant research and solicited community input through social media, Litchfield Historical Society and Litchfield Heritage Commission. The conceptual flag design colors are a blend of blue, white and green with the inclusion of the town seal (see conceptual design below).

Blue represents: History, Merrimack river and knowledge

White represents: Town meeting government transparency and optimism

Green represents: Agriculture, community, altruism/service



ARTICLE 9 - KENO

Operation of Keno games within the town requires majority approval by Litchfield voters. Keno is a rapid draw numbers game operated by the NH Lottery Commission. Numbers are drawn every 5 minutes from 11am to 1am seven days per week. Keno can only be operated in facilities that have a valid state liquor license. Revenues help fund full-day kindergarten throughout the State of New Hampshire. Hidden Creek Country Club, Lobster Boat, Mel’s Diner, Passaconaway Country Club and Romano’s Pizza are all eligible to operate Keno games in the Town of Litchfield. This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0).

ARTICLE 10 - BY PETITION

This petition article seeks to implement one of the recommendations of the October 2018 Municipal Resources Inc. Department of Public Works Feasibility Study. The study recommended creating a Department of Public Works to address staffing and equipment needs for the Litchfield Highway Department, Solid Waste and Recycling Department and town buildings and facilities by implementing organizational changes, purchasing new equipment and addressing staffing needs. This petition article does not raise and appropriate funding and is advisory to the Board of Selectmen. It is recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0).

ARTICLE 11 - BY PETITION

This petition article asks voters if they will continue to support the Code Enforcement Officer, Health Inspector and Zoning Administrator as appointed positions within the Fire Department, or as determined by the Board of Selectmen. The position was recently restructured by the Board of Selectmen and assigned to the Fire Department as a non-department head position. This petition article is advisory to the Board of Selectmen and is not binding. It is recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0-0)

ARTICLE 12 - BY PETITION

This petition article would discontinue the appointed office of Highway Agent and authorize the town to elect the Highway Agent. The current Highway Agent would continue to hold office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election, at which time, the town will elect a Highway Agent. If adopted, the authority of the town to elect the Highway Agent shall continue in effect until changed by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting. The Highway Agent position was changed from elected to appointed in 2014. This article, if approved is binding and is not recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0).

ARTICLE 13 - BY PETITION

This petition article seeks to reverse the appointed office of part-time Fire Chief to an elected position. If approved, the vote would be binding and the current Fire Chief would hold office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election, at which time, the town would elect a part-time Fire Chief. If adopted, the authority of the town to elect the Fire Chief would continue in effect until changed by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting. The Fire Chief position was changed from elected to appointed by citizens petition in 2011. This article is not recommended by the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0).

ARTICLE 14 - BY PETITION

This petition article asks voters if they will continue to support the Town Administrator position as approved in 2010. This petition article is advisory to the Board of Selectmen and is not binding. This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen (4-0-0)

QUESTIONS

For further information please contact Troy Brown, Town Administrator
by email: tbrown@Litchfieldnh.gov or by phone: 603-424-4046 ext 1250

ARTICLES CONTINUED

ARTICLE 4 - HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTH AGENCIES

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$25,000** to support Human Services and Health Agencies that provide services to the Town of Litchfield. If approved, a committee consisting of the Welfare Director, Health Officer and one Resident will review funding requests and submit recommended funding amounts to the Board of Selectmen for approval. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact: **\$0.03**.

YES
NO

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)
Recommended by Budget Committee (6-2-0)*

ARTICLE 5 - TOWN EARNED TIME ACCRUAL EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000** to be placed in the Earned Time Accrual Expendable Trust Fund as previously established. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact: **\$0.00**.

YES
NO

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)
Recommended by Budget Committee (7-1-0)*

ARTICLE 6 - TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Technology and Communication Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the purchase and repair of technology and communication equipment and software and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000** to be placed in the fund; further to name the selectmen as agents to expend from the fund. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact: **\$0.00**.

YES
NO

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)
Recommended by Budget Committee (8-0-0)*

ARTICLE 7 - LAND PURCHASE

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$90,000** to purchase a parcel of land in the Town of Litchfield described as Map 15 Lot 30 on Hillcrest Road for the purpose of making ingress and egress safety improvements to the Transfer / Recycling Facility and Highway Garage and provide for future expansion of operational needs. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. Estimated 2019 tax rate impact: **\$0.00**.

YES
NO

*Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)
Recommended by Budget Committee (8-0-0)*

ARTICLE 8 - TOWN FLAG

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, upon conducting at least two (2) public hearings, to adopt the Official Town Flag.

YES
NO

Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

ARTICLE 9 - KENO

To see if the Town will vote to allow the operation of Keno within the town pursuant to the provisions of NH RSA 284:41 through 51, upon conducting at least two (2) public hearings?

YES
NO

Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

ARTICLE 10 - BY PETITION

This petition article seeks to implement one of the recommendations from the 2018 Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI) report. The study recommended more man-hours for the Litchfield Highway Department. Currently the department does not have the proper staffing to provide appropriate safety standards on the job.

YES
NO

Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

ARTICLE 11 - BY PETITION

To see if the Town will vote to continue the Code Enforcement Officer, Health Inspector and Zoning Administrator as appointed positions within the Fire Department, or as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

YES
NO

Recommended by Board of Selectmen (4-0-0)

ARTICLE 12 - BY PETITION

To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the appointed office of Highway Agent and to authorize the Town to elect the Highway Agent. The current Highway Agent shall continue to hold the office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election, at which time, the Town will elect a Highway Agent. If adopted, the authority of the Town to elect the Highway Agent shall continue in effect until changed by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting.

YES
NO

Not Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING



**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
LITCHFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 12, 2019**

BALLOT 2 OF 2

Thomas L. Briand
TOWN CLERK

ARTICLES CONTINUED

ARTICLE 13 - BY PETITION

To see if the Town will vote to reverse the appointed office of part-time Fire Chief to an elected position. The current Fire Chief shall continue to hold the office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election, at which time, the Town will elect a part-time Fire Chief. If adopted, the authority of the Town to elect the Fire Chief shall continue in effect until changed by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting.

YES
NO

Not Recommended by Board of Selectmen (5-0-0)

ARTICLE 14 - BY PETITION

To see if the Town will continue to support the Town Administrator position.

YES
NO

Recommended by Board of Selectmen (4-0-0)

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED VOTING THIS BALLOT