

Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

Board of Selectmen

Special Meeting

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Meeting Date: 1/2/20

Call to Order: 6:00 pm

Meeting Location: Town Hall

Meeting Called By: Board of Selectmen
Type of Meeting: Selectmen’s Meeting
Facilitator: Steven J. Webber

Five Selectmen were in attendance:
 1. Steven J. Webber, Chairman
 2. Kurt D. Schaefer, Vice Chairman
 3. F. Robert Leary, Sr.
 4. Brent T. Lemire
 5. Kevin A. Lynch

Note Taker: Matthew Sullivan
Minutes Approved: ___/___/_____

In Attendance: Troy Brown, Town Administrator
Memo: Karen White, Finance Manager was in attendance

No Selectmen were absent:

Agenda Topic: Call to Order

Presenter: Selectman S. Webber

1. 6:00 pm - Call to Order
2. 6:00 pm - Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Topic: Business

Presenter: Selectman S. Webber

1. **Review of 2020 Tax Cap Calculation:**
 - a. Karen White, Troy Brown, and Selectman Robert Leary attended the Budget Committee Meeting before the Christmas break.
 - b. Towards the end of the Budget Committee Meeting, the Budget Committee asked how the town was doing with regards to the Tax Cap. They realized at that point they were way over the Tax Cap. The town was over the Tax Cap by \$159,853.
 - c. The primary reason for the overage is the Public Safety Communication System.
 - d. Three major items caused the overage of the 2020 Tax Cap.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| i. Article 4 - Communication System | \$147,474 - Five-year lease payment |
| ii. Article 6 - Health & Human Services | \$25,000 |
| iii. Article 8 - Darrah Pond Milfoil Treatment | \$35,000 |

Before Amending Tax Cap

| Tax Year | Prior Year Tax | Add Back Fund Balance | Tax Cap \$175 | Gross Appropriations | Lease Revenues | Add Veteran’s Credit | Add Overlay | Current Year Tax | Over/Under Tax Cap |
|----------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 2020 | \$4,382,298 | \$0 | \$4557,298 | \$7,326,069 | \$2,795,620 | \$136,702 | \$50,000 | \$4,717,151 | \$159,853 |

2. **Discuss Amending the 2020 Warrant Articles to Meet Tax Cap:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown suggested rewording Article 4 for the Public Safety Communication System. Instead of a five-year lease-purchase, the town will still have a lease-purchase but over a six-year time frame.
 - i. The first year's payment would be deferred.
 - ii. The first payment would be in 2021.
 - iii. The town would still only make five payments but over a six-year time frame.

Article 4

| 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | Total |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$0.00 | \$151,411 | \$151,411 | \$151,411 | \$151,411 | \$151,411 | \$757,055 |

- b. T.A. Troy Brown stated he put together Article 8 based on the figures he received. T.A. Troy Brown said he came up with the \$35,000 figure from the estimates he received and adding \$5,000 for contingency reasons.
 - i. T.A. Troy Brown recommended removing the \$5,000 contingency from Article 8. This would decrease Article 8 to \$30,000.
- c. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that he only felt comfortable, from the remaining Articles, amending Article 6
 - i. T.A. Troy Brown reminded the Selectmen that the committee responsible for dispersing the \$25,000 to Health & Human Service Agencies only recommended dispersing \$15,242.
 - ii. T.A. recommended the Selectmen lower Article 6 by \$10,000. Instead of \$25,000, the committee would have \$15,000.
- d. T.A. Troy Brown informed the Selectmen that if they approve amending Articles 4, 6, and 8 the town would go below the Tax Cap by \$2,621.
- e. T.A. Troy Brown will be meeting with the Budget Committee after the Selectmen's Meeting. The library committee is looking to increase their budget by \$1,200. This will increase the Tax Cap by \$1,200 but will stay under the Tax Cap.

After Amending Tax Cap

| Tax Year | Prior Year Tax | Add Back Fund Balance | Tax Cap \$175 | Gross Appropriations | Lease Revenues | Add Veteran's Credit | Add Overlay | Current Year Tax | Over/Under Tax Cap |
|----------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 2020 | \$4,382,298 | \$0 | \$4557,298 | \$7,163,595 | \$2,795,620 | \$136,702 | \$50,000 | \$4,554,677 | -\$2,621 |

- f. Selectman K. Lynch asked T.A. Troy Brown what the expenditures were from the Health & Human Services fund the last few years. T.A. Troy Brown showed the Selectmen the Human Service Agencies Appropriations amount.

| Year | Balance | Article |
|------|----------|------------|
| 2015 | \$11,250 | Article 13 |
| 2016 | \$15,167 | Article 13 |
| 2017 | \$2,400 | Article 11 |
| 2018 | \$2,320 | Budget |
| 2019 | \$25,000 | Article 4 |
| 2020 | \$15,000 | Article 6 |

- g. Chairman S. Webber and T.A. Troy Brown informed Selectman K. Lynch that the \$25,000 appropriated for 2019 was encumbered. The town has not dispersed the funds to the agencies.

Discussion: Selectman K. Lynch initially did not vote because of a misunderstanding of how the funds were appropriated in 2019 for the Health & Human Services Agencies.

Motion (Selectman Lemire / Selectman Schaefer) I make a motion to approve the recommendation of the Town Administrator to reword our Warrant Articles to come in line with the Budget Committee’s recommendation to come within the Tax Cap.

Vote: 5-0-0

Agenda Topic: Petition Warrant Article

Presenter: Selectman S. Webber

1. Chairman S. Webber asked the other Selectmen if they believed the Selectmen should vote to recommend the Petition Article.
 - a. Selectman R. Leary stated he did not believe the Selectmen should vote to recommend the Article.
 - b. Selectman K. Schaefer asked if the prior Board of Selectmen had voted on Petition Articles. Chairman S. Lemire informed him they did vote on Petition Articles last year.
 - c. Selectman B. Lemire asked T.A. Troy Brown if there was a tax impact with Article 14 – Elderly Exemption. T.A. Troy Brown informed the Selectmen there was no way to calculate the tax impact for this Petition Article.
 - d. The town would lose approximately \$2,145,000 of assessed value off the tax base. This amount would equal about \$51,000 in tax revenue.
 - e. T.A. Troy Brown does not believe this will have a huge impact on the taxpayers.

| Gross Income | Current | Proposed | Increase |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Single | \$30,000 | \$45,000 | \$15,000 |
| Married | \$45,000 | \$55,000 | \$10,000 |
| | | | |
| Total Assets | | | |
| Single | \$300,000 | \$300,000 | \$0.00 |
| Married | \$300,000 | \$300,000 | \$0.00 |
| | | | |
| Exemptions | | | |
| 65 to 74 years | \$50,000 | \$85,000 | \$35,000 |
| 75 to 79 years | \$80,000 | \$140,000 | \$60,000 |
| 80+ years | \$125,000 | \$190,000 | \$65,000 |
| | | | |
| Cost Impact | | | |
| 65 to 74 years | \$605,700 | \$955,700 | \$350,000 |
| 75 to 79 years | \$920,000 | \$1,610,000 | \$690,000 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 80+ years | \$2,215,000 | \$3320,000 | \$1,105,000 |
| Total | \$3,740,700 | \$5,885,700 | \$2,145,000 |
| | | | |
| Tax Impact | \$88,467.56 | \$139,196.81 | \$50,729.25 |

Agenda Topic: Letter from Residents

Presenter: Selectman S. Webber

1. Chairman S. Webber read a letter from two residents regarding Article 13 and Article 14:
 - a. Betty Vaughn - Stark Lane
 - b. Nicole Fordey - Page Road
2. The residents had questions and comments on Article 13 and 14. And requested a vote on Article 14 before the Deliberative Session.
3. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey wanted to know the intent of the article, and how a 'yes' or 'no' vote on Article 13 would be interpreted by the Board of Selectmen and other town officials.
4. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey wrote how they believe 'Asking for input, one building at a time, is incredibly short-sighted.'
5. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey requested the Selectmen to reconsider their support for Article 13 or at the very least elaborate their support in a public setting.
6. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey believe passing Article 13 would open the door for spending and construction for a facility that is a want, not a need or a priority.
7. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey requested more information be provided on the impact financially and logistically.
8. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey requested the Selectmen reword Article 14. They were not asking to change the intent of the Article but to clear what would change with the Elderly Exemptions.
9. Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Fordey thanked the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen for their service to the town of Litchfield and their attention to the letter.
10. Chairman S. Webber responded by saying the Board of Selectmen covered the concerns on Article 14.
11. Chairman S. Webber mentioned the Rec Commission came to the Selectmen requesting help creating an Article.
12. Selectman B. Lemire mentioned that Article 13 is only to explore the will of the people.
13. Chairman S. Webber included the resident's vote on Article 13 would help the Capital Improvement Plan Committee, The committee would know from the vote whether a community center was a priority or not a priority from the results of the vote.

Discussion: Chairman S. Webber mentioned the Selectmen are not able to change the wording of Article 14. The time to change the wording is during the Deliberative Session. Selectman R. Leary added the Selectmen did not vote on Article 14, at the last meeting, because the Selectmen did not have the information needed to vote.

Motion (Selectman Lemire / Selectman Schaefer) I move the Board of Selectmen to recommend Article 14.

Vote: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Agenda Topic: Adjourn the Public Portion of Meeting

Presenter: Selectman S. Webber

Discussion: None

Motion (Selectman Lemire / Selectman Schaefer) Move to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

Steven J. Webber, Chairman

Kurt D. Schaefer, Vice Chairman

F. Robert Leary, Sr.

Brent T. Lemire

Kevin A. Lynch