

**Amended Draft Minutes of the
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting
Held on June 25, 2020**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, June 25, 2020, at Litchfield Town Hall, Two Liberty Way, Litchfield, NH 03052 and remote locations.

In response to COVID- 19 and the resulting need to practice social distancing, the meeting will be held remotely via Webex and be broadcast live via LCTV

PRESENT: A Cutter (Chair), N Fordey (Vice Chair), K Douglas, B Hodgkins, W Hayes, J Son, C Harrison (School Board Representative), R Leary (Selectmen Representatives)

Absent: J Bourque

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cutter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

● **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

2. PUBLIC INPUT

Residents were encouraged to submit comments via email to Andrew Cutter, Budget Committee Chair, acutter@litchfieldnh.gov. Messages must include commenter's first and last name & address.

There was no public input.

3. REVIEW / REVISION OF AGENDA

There were no revisions to the agenda.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Cutter reported that on he received the following documents from the school district: the budget expenditure report, June 2 minutes, June 2020 Business Administrator's report, and questions from Mrs. Fordey for the Town.

5. REVIEW / ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

● **May 28, 2020**

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to approve the minutes of May 28, 2020 as amended

SECOND: by Mr. Hodgkins

VOTE to approve the minutes was taken by roll call vote:

Mr. Hodgkins, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes Mr. Leary, yes; Mrs. Fordey, yes; Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Cutter, yes.

The motion carried.

6. REPORTS

- **Town Business**

- **General Update**

Mr. Leary reported that town assessments have been sent out to homeowners and the Select Board has invited a representative from Avitar, property assessment company, to a meeting. He further reported Town Hall has opened and is allowing people in using a staggered approach. He thanked the community for their patience through the pandemic.

- **RSA 32:22; Review of Expenditures**

Mr. Cutter reported that he received the weekly expenditures report from the Town and distributed the report to Committee members.

Mrs. Fordey commented that she asked about the budget for ballots in light of the two elections that are upcoming. She indicated the Town Administrator assured her there will be funding from the State to help with the costs.

Mrs. Fordey asked about the new expense line in the Town budget for COVID-19 to capture most of the expenses with the exception of payroll taxes and overtime. She indicated the Town Administrator responded that it is for tracking reimbursements and payments, and the Town will receive funding for it. She noted that she asked about \$2,500 of expenditures that were not accounted for (that she could determine), but explanations were provided.

Mr. Cutter offered to share the questions and responses with the Budget Committee.

- **School Business**

- **General Update**

Mrs. Harrison reported that the School Board met on June 16, 2020 and discussed end of year expenditures and spend ahead opportunities for next year, which would address facilities/maintenance and/or equipment for replacement. A School Reopening Task Force has been assembled; guidance from the State is anticipated; the task force will submit a reopening plan by July 30. She noted there will be subcommittee meetings and surveys will be sent out to the community.

Mrs. Harrison reported that the Board reviewed the year end financials, which reflect a fund balance of approximately \$1.3M, of which \$734,500 will be returned to offset the tax rate; \$363,000 will be spent on year end items/projects; \$100,000 in warrant articles has been transferred.

Mr. Cutter indicated that the Committee will share year end expenditures with the Committee.

Mrs. Harrison reviewed the year end spending that was approved by the School Board;

- Warrant articles that were approved by the voters
 - Barricade system for GMS

- Capital Improvement Expendable Fund that will be used for the energy project consulting fees for Dick Henry and Windy Hill Associates
- LMS secure vestibule and canopy project, for which the district received \$100,000 in grant funds that expires December 2020 (the project will begin this summer)
 - Auto Scrubber for CHS
 - Ed Puzzle for district-wide remote instruction
 - AP Chemistry books for CHS
 - Replacement of roofs for four dugouts at CHS
 - Mobile bleachers for CHS (existing bleachers are not structurally sound)
 - Shirts for athletes who were not able to play this spring
 - Repair of north walkway at CHS
 - Exterior door locks at GMS
 - Replacement of the old swing set at GMS (unsafe for use)
 - Outfitting the fifth grade 3 classroom
 - 2:1 Chromebook expansion at GMS for grade 3
 - Replace locker room floor at LMS
 - Shelving for food service kitchen at LMS
 - Exterior door locks at LMS.

Mr. Son asked if CARES funds will be used to offset the costs in the fund balance for COVID needs.

Mrs. Harrison indicated there is no ruling from the State on how those funds can be used at this time. She indicated that there has been discussion about using it for Title I needs for remote-learning; purchasing hand washing and sanitizing stations; reimbursing teachers for internet access for remote instruction; but no decisions have been made.

RSA 32:22; Review of Expenditures

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any questions regarding school district budget expenditures. Committee members had no questions.

7. MEMBER INPUT / NEW BUSINESS

- **2020-2021 Meeting Calendar Finalization**

Mr. Cutter provided a final draft of the 2020-2021 Budget meetings calendar. He indicated he is trying to limit the number of Tuesday sessions during the school district budget reviews this fall. He commented that he is aware the Superintendent and the School Board are concerned about the date for the general election, which he believes will be November 3.

Andrew - acceptance and approval of meeting calendar finalization - trying to limit amount of tuesday sessions - know superintendent and board is concerned about general election - should be on Nov 3

Mrs. Harrison indicated that since the date of the General Election is November 3, the November 10 budget session meeting should not be an issue. She mentioned the only request from the School Board is that January 14, 2021 be selected as the date for the budget hearing.

Mr. Cutter commented budget hearings have been held historically on Thursday evenings. He indicated that he suggested January 16 (Saturday) to ensure there is enough time to go through the Capital Plan items with the public.

Mrs. Harrison commented it is a holiday weekend and families often go away. She indicated that she was not sure what the purpose of discussing the Capital Plans would serve.

Mr. Cutter commented it is to discuss any items that will be presented on the warrant.

Mrs. Douglas recommended keeping the hearing on Thursday evening as people are used to that schedule.

Mr. Leary pointed out that there are a lot of possibilities with Capital Improvement and we will not know anything until we get closer to the end of the year. He suggested holding January 14 for the hearing and a decision can always be made at a later date.

Mrs. Douglas commented that a special meeting for capital improvements may be warranted.

Mr. Cutter indicated that the hearing will be planned for January 14, 2021 per Committee decision.

Mr. Son suggested that we consider some other opportunities for the townspeople to be able to listen to the town hearings and be sure to be prepared for using virtual methods.

Mr. Cutter indicated this was addressed by the Town Administrator and we will take direction from the Town as they begin their reopening phases.

- **Bylaws Adoption**

Mr. Cutter reminded the Committee that Mr. Son submitted wording regarding social media use for the bylaws. He asked if any members had any concerns or questions. Hearing none, Mr. Cutter asked for a motion to adopt the revised bylaws.

MOTION: by Mr. Leary

Move to adopt the bylaws as revised

SECOND: by Mrs. Douglas

VOTE to approve the minutes was taken by roll call vote:

Mr. Hodgkins, no; Mrs. Harrison, yes Mr. Leary, yes; Mrs. Fordey, yes; Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Cutter, yes.

The motion carried.

- **Capital Improvement Planning Commission - Town/School Updates**

Mrs. Fordey indicated that she has not heard of any additional meetings with the School District Capital Planning Committee since submitting the plan to the Town.

Mr. Cutter reported the Town Capital Improvement Committee met and the following was presented and discussed:

- Conservation Commission requested \$2M for additional land acquisition
- Fire Department planning to replace two trucks: pumper for \$622,000 and another truck the following year for \$620,000
- Police Department requesting \$6M for a new station to be adjoined to the new fire station.

He noted the Commission will meet on June 29 to discuss plans for the new elementary school and what it will mean for the request for the police station.

8. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

9. ADJOURN

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: by Mr. Son

VOTE to adjourn the meeting was taken by roll call:

Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Hodgkins, yes; Mrs. Fordey, yes; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Cutter, yes.

The motion carried.

Next meeting: August 27, 2020

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Recorded by: Michele E. Flynn, Recording Secretary4

Approved: