

**Revised Draft Minutes of the  
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting  
Held on March 25, 2021**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2021, 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), K Douglas, W Hayes, J Son, D Barka, K Stevens, C Harrison (School Board Representative), R Leary (Selectmen Representative)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

● **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. WELCOME TO NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS**

Mr. Cutter welcomed newly elected members, Derek Barka and Kate Stevens, to the Committee, and welcomed returning members.

**3. RESIGNATION**

Mr. Cutter announced that he received a resignation from Mrs. Fordey and asked her to attend the meeting to express her formal resignation.

Mrs. Fordey indicated that she would have to resign her position on the Committee due to an unexpected life event, which requires her family to move out of New Hampshire. She thanked Committee members for embracing her service and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve.

Mr. Cutter and Committee members thanked Mrs. Fordey for her service and wished her luck in her future endeavors.

**4. ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR**

Mr. Cutter asked for nominations for Chairperson.

***Mrs. Douglas made a motion to nominate Andrew Cutter as Budget Committee Chair. Mr. Son seconded.***

Mrs. Douglas expressed her appreciation for Mr. Cutter's leadership and his skill at following the budget process.

*The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Stevens, yes; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Cutter yes.*

**Mr. Cutter was elected Budget Committee Chair.**

Mr. Cutter asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

*Mr. Hayes made a motion to nominate Keri Douglas as Budget Committee Vice Chair. Mr. Barka seconded.*

Mr. Hayes indicated that Mrs. Douglas has done a great job in the past, has the experience, is candid and has had the support of the committee in the past.

*Mr. Cutter made a motion to nominate John David Son as Budget Committee Vice Chair. Mrs. Harrison seconded.*

Mr. Cutter indicated Mr. Son did a great job on the Committee last year and has the ability to make sound strategic decisions with logical rationale.

*The motion to nominate Keri Douglas as Vice Chair failed by roll call vote: Mr. Son, no; Mrs. Harrison, no; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Stevens, no; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Cutter no.*

*The motion to nominate John David Son as Vice Chair carried by roll call vote: Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Hayes, no; Mr. Leary, no; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Stevens, yes; Mrs. Douglas, no; Mr. Cutter yes.*

**Mr. Son was elected as Budget Committee Vice Chair.**

## **5. MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS:**

Mr. Cutter asked for member interest in Committee assignments.

- **Social Media Archivist**

Mrs. Stevens volunteered for the Social Media Archivist assignment.

- **Budget Committee Representative to School Board Facilities Improvement Committee**

Mr. Son volunteered for the Representative to the School Board Facilities Improvement Committee assignment.

- **Budget Committee Representative to Select Board Capital Planning Committee**

Mr. Cutter volunteered for the Representative to the Select Board Capital Planning Committee assignment.

## 6. PUBLIC INPUT

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

Ben Sargent, Chief of Police, expressed thanks to Committee members for support of town department heads during the budget process.

## 7. REVIEW / REVISION OF AGENDA

There were no revisions to the agenda.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

## 9. REVIEW / ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

### • January 7, 2021

*Mrs. Douglas made a motion to approve the minutes of January 7, 2021 as amended. Mr. Hayes seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, abstain; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Barka, abstain; Mrs. Stevens, abstain; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Cutter yes.*

### • January 14, 2021

*Mrs. Douglas made a motion to approve the minutes of January 14, 2021 as amended. Mr. Leary seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, abstain; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Barka, abstain; Mrs. Stevens, abstain; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Cutter yes.*

## 10. ELECTION RESULTS

Mr. Cutter asked Committee members for their thoughts regarding the March 2021 election results. He commented that he was surprised at the vote for the second Technology Integrator position (School District Article 3).

Mrs. Douglas indicated the first position (Article 2) was approved by only 13 votes.

Mrs. Stevens commented that the Article 4, funds for the Capital Improvements Expendable Trust Fund, was strongly approved.

Mrs. Douglas commented that we tend to talk interchangeably as a fund for building and maintenance. She indicated she is not sure what was being voted on and that there was some mention of using the funds for failing equipment, but that she does not know what the other half is used for.

Mrs. Stevens commented that she thought the fund would be used for work toward the new school, but in the meantime everything else has to be addressed.

Mrs. Douglas indicated she would like to see the questions separated so that we can get the answers once and for all.

## **11. REPORTS**

- **Town Reports**
  - **General Updates**

Mr. Leary reported that the Town is ramping up for the yearly cycle.

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

There were no questions on expenditures.

- **School Business**
  - **General Updates**

Mrs. Harrison reported:

- Mrs. MacDonald was re-elected to the Board and Heidi Ames was elected as a new member
- Mrs. Harrison was elected as Chair of the School Board and Mr. Bourque was elected as Vice Chair
- The Board approved a five year construction plan district-wide
  - Work is continuing on the ventilation systems and the plan is to work toward a new school
- The Board approved a contract for a Construction Manager for the LMS Renovation Project
  - Work with ventilation systems resulted in discovery of energy deficiencies in the building envelope
  - The project will address energy efficiency by replacing the roof and windows over the summer as Phase I
  - Funds are available to use toward the project.

Mr. Cutter indicated that Mrs. Flynn provided the Business Administrator's Report for the Committee, which he emailed to Committee members.

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

Mr. Cutter mentioned that Mrs. Flynn will provide the year to date budget expenditures to the Committee.

Mr. Barka asked if the district will have chromebooks for first graders.

Mrs. Harrison commented that we wanted to have a classroom set to stay in the school for the students to be able to use.

Mr. Barka asked if the chromebooks for grade 8 and grade 9 students are part of the spend ahead. Mrs. Harrison responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Son asked if the School Board has any knowledge of what the appropriations will be for the next round of stimulus funds.

Mrs. Harrison indicated that approximately \$230,000 has been received, but the rules for spending the funds have not been received by the district at this time.

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

### **• Budget Calendar 2021-2022**

Mr. Cutter mentioned that he will develop a draft budget calendar for the Committee to review at the next meeting. He noted that the bylaws state the Committee will not meet past 9:30 pm. He indicated that last year the Committee agreed to start the non-voting budget review meetings at 6:30 pm.

Mrs. Douglas commented she would prefer not to start at 6:30 pm, but to start at 7:00 pm.

Mrs. Stevens asked if meetings will retain a remote option for attendance. Mr. Cutter indicated that decision will be made once we see results of the pandemic situation as it continues.

Mr. Son commented if the School Board will follow the same model for their budget reviews this coming fall, it would be better to have the budget information ahead of time.

Mrs. Harrison indicated that her intent is to provide budget books to the Budget Committee members ahead of the review meetings.

Mr. Cutter explained for new members that the School Board held two night meetings to present their budget to the Committee with department heads in attendance.

Mrs. Douglas commented that she did not care for that process, but instead prefers the traditional process as it is more thorough and Committee members have the ability to ask questions.

Mr. Cutter indicated that he agreed with the process, but it was more about how it was executed.

Mrs. Harrison mentioned there were some communication gaps with members' questions getting to the Superintendent, but those issues will be addressed.

Mrs. Douglas commented with the school district process typically the School Board digests and debates the budget and she prefers that type of discussion.

Mr. Son commented that it would have been more beneficial if department heads attended the Budget Committee budget review meetings so we could ask them questions.

Mr. Cutter commented we will work with the School Board Chair on that process.

- **Bylaws Review**

Mr. Cutter indicated that the Committee will review the bylaws at the next meeting and adopt the bylaws at the May meeting.

- **Resignation Process**

Mr. Cutter commented that he extended an invitation to Scott Taylor, who was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Budget Committee last year, to rejoin the Committee. He believes that Mr. Taylor was a great member of the Committee last year and was on the March 2021 ballot as a candidate for a two year position, but did not get re-elected. Mr. Cutter indicated he will send out a public notice so that interested parties can apply for the open position. He noted the Budget Committee will interview candidates and vote to fill the seat.

### **13. PUBLIC INPUT**

Scott Taylor, 6 Lilac Court, expressed interest in filling the Budget Committee member vacancy. He indicated he is a good choice because he had 100% attendance last year; he brings preparation and due diligence to the table; he has a professional manner when interacting with presenters.

Mr. Son commented that he spoke with Mr. Taylor and is pleased he is interested in rejoining the Committee. He indicated that they did not always agree on everything, but Mr. Taylor brought good thought and discussion to the meetings.

Mr. Hayes and Mr. Leary agreed.

Mrs. Harrison asked if the Budget Committee has every had training (i.e. roles, responsibilities, budget laws) similar to what is offered to School Board Chairs and members through the NHSBA.

Mr. Cutter indicated the NHMA has come in to present to the Budget Committee and some members participated in a virtual training last year.

Mr. Leary offered to get information for NHMA training for the Budget Committee.

### **14. ADJOURN**

*Mrs. Douglas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m. Mr. Leary seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Son, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mr. Hayes, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Mr. Barka, yes; Mrs. Stevens, yes; Mrs. Douglas, yes; Mr. Cutter yes.*

**Next meeting: April 22, 2021**

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

**Approved:**