Litchfield Board of Finance

Special Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2016

<u>Call to order.</u> Chairman David Geiger called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Litchfield Intermediate School Art Room with the following members present: Helen Bunnell, Anne Dranginis, Mitchell S. Fishman and David Geiger and Rose Blondin (alternate).

Asbent were: members Ed Gadomski and David W. Wilson and alternate member Sky Post.

Also present: Leo Paul, Jr., First Selectman, and members of the board of Education Frank Simone (chair), John Bongiorno, Gayle Carr, Betsy Fabbri and Wayne Shuhi.

<u>Appointment of Acting Secretary.</u> In the absence of the usual secretary Joanne Jaacks, the chair appointed Mitchell Fishman as acting secretary of the meeting.

<u>Appointment of Alternate Member.</u> The chair appointed Rose Blondin as a voting member of the board in place of one of the absent members.

<u>Public Comment:</u> There was none.

<u>Consideration of the Proposed FY2015-2016 Budget of the Board of Education</u>. Mr. Geiger noted that the members of the board previously had received by email a memorandum from David Fiorillo, director of business operations for the BOE, reporting that the BOE had made a few adjustments to the budget originally submitted by it at the March 16th meeting of the board of finance, resulting in a revised proposed budget for FY 16-17 totalling $17,423,581, a 2.49% increase over the current year budget, as compared to a proposed 2.83% increase in the BOE's original proposal. He asked Mr. Simone if the BOE had approved the new proposal, and Mr. Simone confirmed that it had. Ms. Bunnell briefly reviewed the changes noted in Mr. Fiorillo's memorandum.

The chair then asked a number of questions concerning the proposed budget, including questions regarding professional development, the revised budget codes for hardware and software and how the totals compared to the current budget for such items, the technology hardware replacement budget and the proposed levels of spending over the next five years, and the addition of a fifth administrator in FY 2015. Mr. Bongiorno responded to the questions about the replacement of computers, and several of the BOE members present discussed the duties of the current dean of students (the additional administrator), which were said to include 1-on-1 work with students needing extra attention as well as evaluation of teachers, and which they said had made a "big diffeence" this year, especially at the Middle School. Mr. Shuhi explained that the dean of students did not represent an additional full-time-equivalent ("FTE") employee, because he intially replaced a FTE teacher who left the district and was not replaced, but could not be classified as a teacher because of issues arising under the agreement with the teachers' bargaining unit. Ms. Bunnell also asked about the new line item under Fiscal Services and Mr. Fishman inquired about the anticipated costs of the new replacement computers and related hardware.

<u>Motion:</u> Ms. Bunnell moved to approve the revised BOE budget as most recently presented, with the 2.49% increase. Ms. Dranginis seconded the motion. Mr. Geiger chair proposed an amendent to the motion to reduce the increased amount to 2.0%, or a total budget of $17,340,000. Ms. Dranginis seconded the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment was approved unanimously on a voice vote. The motion as so amended to approve a proposed budget of $17,340,000 for the BOE for FY 2016-17 was then unanimously approved on a voice vote.

<u>Consideration of the proposed FY2015-2016 budget of the Board of Selectmen.</u> This proposed budget had been presented to the board by Mr. Paul on March 21, 2016.

<u>Motion:</u> Ms. Dranginis moved to approve the selectmens' budget as so presented. Ms. Blondin seconded the motion.

Mr. Paul briefly reviewed his summary of the proposed selectmens' budget, which provided for total spending of $9,270,605 (an increase of 2.61% over the current fiscal year), and the principal items of increase as compared to the current fiscal year. After some further discussion, the motion to approve the proposed budget was unanimously approved on a voice vote, with the chair abstaining. In response to a question from Mr. Fishman, Mr. Geiger indicated that he would have voted "aye" had his vote been required.

<u>Consideration of proposed FY2105-16 Capital Spending and Debt Service Budget.</u> This

budge had been presented at the March 21, 2016 meeting of this board by David T. Wilson, chair of the Capital Committee. The total proposed was $3,757,255 (an increase of 7.05% over the current year's budget), of which $2,569,884 was for capital spending and the balance for debt service on existing obligations.

Motion: Ms. Blondin moved approval of the proposed budget as presented. Ms. Danginis seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Geiger then distributed a one-page preliminary analysis prepared by the town's Finance Department, which showed that the total of all three budgets as approved by the board of finance was $30,367,860, a 2.79% increase over the current fiscal year. The analysis also showed that, assuming a net grand list of $1,010,173,406, raising the tax revenues required to support the proposed budget (after reflecting anticipated receipts from other sources such as the state government) would require an increase in the mill rate of 0.5%, from 26.2 to 26.7 mills.

Adjournment. Upon motion made by Ms. Dranginis and seconded by Ms. Blondin and unanimously approved, the meeting was then adjourned as approximately 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell S. Fishman, acting secretary