

Town of Lyme  
Budget Committee  
January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
7:00PM  
Lyme School Cafeteria

## Public Hearing on the Town & School Proposed 2010 budget

Approved: February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

Present at this meeting: Budget Committee Members: Judith Brotman, Richard Jones, Josh Kilham, Mark Schiffman, William Lewis, Earl Strout, Dick Justice, Tim Cook, Morton Bailey, & Elizabeth Glenshaw. Selectmen: Simon Carr & Charles Ragan. School Superintendent: Gordon Schnare. School Principal: Jeff Valance. Community members: Cynthia Bognolo, Julia Elder, Lou Anne Conley, Nancy & Blake Alison, Sam Green, Lee Larson, Margaret Minnock, Andrea Colgan, Dan Parish, Jake Cook, Judy Barker, Nancy Dwight, Curtis Shepard, Kate Cook, Brian Cook, Dan Lynch, Kristin Roth, Peter Glenshaw, Kate Semple Barta, Jeffrey Damren, Audrey Brown and Nancy Wilson.  
Scribe: Dina Cutting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chair Brotman.

Ms. Lewis moved to approve the minutes of the January 20<sup>th</sup> 2010 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Kilham. The minutes were voted unanimously in favor.

Mr. Strout explained that because of personal reasons he was going to recuse himself from this Public Hearing and the vote on the school budget.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:10 by Chair Brotman.

School Budget:

Mr. Schiffman gave a brief over view of what had happened in the past Budget Committee meetings. He also noted the previous changes to the school budget. The Budget Committees recommendation to cut \$41,421.00 is as follows:

- \$17,075.00 - Cut half time special education aide (includes benefits)
- \$5,000.00 - Cut Writing Specialist
- \$7,309.00 - 1% reduction in COLA for non-union staff/administrator (with associated benefits)
- \$12,037.00 - 1% reduction in COLA for faculty/teachers covered by CBA (with associated benefits) (waived by LEA vote)

Budget Committee members commended the teachers and thanked them for making the decision to give back a portion of their contracted increase for this budget cycle.

Mr. Schiffman noted the School Board is uncomfortable with the last cuts from the budget. They are concerned they will not have the ability to handle any surprises in the

budget that may come along. Mr. Lewis gave a brief review of how the Budget Committee got to where they are at present concerning the budget cuts. Followed was a brief discussion concerning the \$300,000.00 left from last year's budget and how that affected the tax rate.

**Public Comments:**

Blake Alison: Concerns were expressed that even if the budget was flat, the people's taxes may go up anyway because of possible property assessment changes.

An explanation detailing the Town's high school choice arrangement was given.

Dan Parish stated that the School board has in the past 2 years looked at the present high school choice arrangement and come to the conclusion that the present agreement is saving the tax payer money. Mr. Schiffman stated that if one single high school were to be selected it would be Hanover. At present the town has students that go to other area high schools with a lower tuition rate. If they all went to Hanover it would cost more.

Lee Larson asked what the revenues look like. The revenues were reviewed.

Mr. Valance reviewed the student count for K-8 and 9-12 at the present time. Also noting the staffing for the budget year 2010-2011 will not increase but the student count will.

Julia Elder asked if Lyme received any state money from taxes? No

Brian Cook stated that if the school had spent the \$300,000.00 from last year, we would not be having this discussion now. This is an unfortunate situation and is misleading financially.

Cynthia Bognolo gave a brief history of past high school tuition arrangements and how the present arrangement was enacted.

At this time Mr. Lewis moved to approve \$4,743,506.00 for the 2010-2011 school budget. Seconded by Mr. Justice.

Mr. Schiffman reiterated that this is the Budget Committee's recommended number, not the School Board's recommendation. The School Board's recommended budget will be reflected on the School warrant.

Ms. Glenshaw expressed concerns over the budget committee's bottom line number because of the noted cuts. Ms. Glenshaw requested an amendment to the above figure. Mrs. Brotman asked if Mr. Lewis and Mr. Justice would consider an amendment to their motion before voting. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Justice declined to amend their motion.

The motion to approve a budget of \$4,743,506 for the 2010-2011 school year was voted 5 in favor, 3 against (Kilham, Glenshaw & Schiffman). The motion passed.

Chair Brotman took this opportunity to thank the staff and teachers for their continued hard work and their dedication to the children; and, specifically, in this difficult economic year, for their vote to forgo a portion of their contracted salary increase. This is a gift to the Town, which we acknowledge with sincere thanks.

At 8:05 the Public Hearing was closed.

Mr. Strout re-joined the meeting at this time.

The Budget Committee had a brief discussion on voting procedures at the school district meeting. Followed was a discussion concerning adding an additional warrant article to the School Warrant and whether there is time to do this. The warrant article would be to put certain monies into the Capital Reserve Funds. Mr. Schiffman will check with Mr. Schnare on this.

Mr. Lewis moved to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Seconded by Mr. Kilham. Voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dina Cutting