

Town of Lyme  
Budget Committee  
January 6, 2010  
7:00PM  
Town Office Conference Room

Approved: January 13, 2010

Present at this meeting: Budget Committee Members: Judith Brotman, Richard Jones, Josh Kilham, Freda Swan, William Lewis, Tim Cook, Earl Strout, Richard Justice, Mark Schiffman & Elizabeth Glenshaw. Selectman: Simon Carr. Superintendent: Gordon Schnare. Principal: Jeff Valance. Community members: Curtis Shepard, Andrea Colgan & Lou Ann Conroy. Dina Cutting (Scribe).

Called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Brotman.

- 1) Mrs. Swan moved to approve the minutes of the December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jones. Voted unanimously in favor.
- 2) Mr. Jones reported an error on the Town budget spread sheet. \$4,000.00 can be deducted from the "To Expendable Trust Funds". Line 450 To Expendable Trust Funds will be \$31,000.00 not \$35,000.00.
- 3) Chair Brotman asked if there were any public comments at this time. There being none the meeting moved to a presentation of the 2010-2011 school budget by Mr. Schiffmen.
- 4) The presentation began with some general education-related items being highlighted:
  - Lyme is an excellent school, with many multi-year school improvements having been made;
  - Lyme recognizes and creates educational programs that work with the different learning styles of children
  - Lyme has had measurable progress from year to year on the standardized testing.

During the presentation questions were asked and answered concerning the following topics:

- The need to split 2 grades next year
- There will be no increase in staffing, present staff will be reassigned
- Some support positions will be eliminated
- Although the Superintendent is not comfortable with the current Library situation, it will continue for another year in its present configuration.
- Some building improvement projects will be put off for at least another year.
- A decrease in state aid is anticipated for the upcoming budget year.
- Language programs now include French and Spanish, with the Spanish program received grant funding to offset its costs this year.

The total requested school budget for the 2010-2011 school year is \$ 4,799,898

Given this information, there was a lengthy discussion concerning the use of the High School Tuition Trust Fund and the Special Education Trust Fund. Included in that discussion were concerns about:

- High school tuition amounts
- How many students are factored into the budget request and how they come up with this figure.
- The agreements and/or memorandums with area high schools
- Special education savings in high school students
- Personnel, salaries, benefits and retirement
- Fuel costs
- Food services
- SAU Administrative costs, and the savings realized by moving to the basement of the Town Library

5) The Budget Committee advised the School Board that a 10% increase in the tax rate was a large, and possibly unattainable increase. Mr. Schiffmen noted that some information was not final and they were waiting for final High School tuition figures. This information could be presented to the School Board prior to School District meeting and could make the requested amount change.

The School Board was asked to look at options to lower the increase in the budget request and present those options to the Budget Committee at their next meeting.

6) Mr. Lewis requested the following information concerning the undesignated fund balance:

- (1) A history of how these funds are generated and used,
- (2) Where these funds were held and invested.
- (3) The balance of these funds as of December 31, 2009.

Reminder: Next Budget committee meeting is this Wednesday January 13, 2010 @ 7:00pm.

First Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dina Cutting