

Town of Lyme
Budget Committee
January 18, 2012
7:00PM
Town Office/Police Station
Conference Room
PUBLIC HEARING

Approved: February 15th, 2012

Present at this meeting: Budget Committee Members: Judy Brotman, Simon Carr, Laszlo Bardos, Earl Strout, Elizabeth Glenshaw, Tim Cook, Scott May, Lisa Celone, Morton Bailey & Phil Barta. Selectman: Charles Ragan. School Board Chairman: Mark Schiffman; Superintendent: Michael Harris. Principal: Jeff Valance. School media specialist: Jake Cooke. Librarian: Betsy Eaton. Library Trustees: Nancy Snyder & Mardi Bowles. Community members: Barbara & David Roby, Andrea Colgan & Jay Smith. Scribe: Dina Cutting.

The Budget Committee Public Hearing on the proposed School and Town budgets was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chair Brotman.

1. Mr. Bardos moved to approve the minutes of the January 4th 2012 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Carr. Typo corrections were offered. Voted unanimously in favor of the minutes as amended.

2. Library & School:

Betsy Eaton & Jake Cooke gave a presentation on the working relationship between the Library and the school.

Betsy gave a list of functions the Library provides for the school. In addition, a brief review of the circumstances surrounding the change in School Librarian duties and the School media specialist job was presented.

Because these are now two separate jobs, one for the school and one for the public library, it is believed that the quality of services for the students is better now.

Having one librarian responsible for both the town library functions and the school library needs is too much for one individual.

Mr. Strout noted that this circumstance is a good example of where the budget committee could be proactive. If we set up some sub-committees to work with individual departments to really know what is going on and how the numbers are formulated, it would help with the broader budget discussions.

Ms. Glenshaw asked how the budget committee could get more information on what the cost comfort level is for the town concerning the Library. Given that the library is now in a search for a new Librarian, this seems like a good time to try and come up with some creative solutions. She also suggested that it was very important to have a member representing the school on the librarian search committee.

Mrs. Snyder discussed the newly formed search committee for the Librarian, and noted that there was not any member of the school staff on this search committee. She will take this suggestion back to the committee.

Ms. Celone commented that it is important to take this step while you are defining the new Librarian's position not after the hiring process is concluded.

Mr. Barta reiterated that this is a good time to add an individual from the school to the search committee.

There followed a brief discussion concerning the use of the Library as the school library. The Budget Committee thanked Mrs. Eaton, Mr. Cooke, Ms. Snyder and Ms. Bowles for coming to the budget committee meeting this evening to present additional information.

3. School Budget review:

Mrs. Brotman explained that if the revised school budget is approved, the addition of \$10.00 into the School Building Maintenance line will create the need for an additional Budget Hearing. The addition of funding to a line that has been zeroed out is considered a significant change, which then necessitates the additional hearing.

Mr. Schiffman addressed the change in the budget. Because of the potential plans to increase the classroom size of the school, the school board felt this line was necessary, therefore \$10.00 was added in the Building Maintenance line. One of the options being considered by the school board includes using High School Tuition CRF to fund this addition. Instead of needing to borrow the funds for the addition, the High School Tuition CRF would be used for the payment of high school tuition this year, thus freeing up the funds allocated within the budget for high school tuition, allowing those funds to be moved to the Building Maintenance line and then used for the additional space needs, along with the new CRF for enrolment stabilization.

The various CRF funds for the school were discussed.

The possible option of a small bond was discussed briefly

Mr. Ragan expressed concern with the idea of funds being used for purposes other than what the fund was set up for.

Mr. Roby commented it would be a mistake to not be open about the proposed use of the high school tuition funds for the purpose of building an addition onto the school. Mrs. Roby agreed that there is a need to be forth right about the proposed use, and suggested that some thought should be given to a temporary building.

Mr. May noted that even if the school did not receive new students, this need for additional space is already there. [At this time Mrs. Celone had to leave the Public Hearing.] A general discussion followed.

Mr. Bailey commented that he felt this was too short a time to come to the budget committee with this kind of building addition proposal, and that any consideration now would be too hurried.

The Budget Committee noted that there are numerous groups this proposal would need to go through to be approved prior to going before the town, including but not limited to the DRA; the Trustees of Trust Fund, to determine if these High school tuition funds can be used for a building addition; the Planning Board and the Zoning Board.

Mr. Schiffman reported that the negotiations for a new teacher contract have been finalized. There will be a warrant article for a 3 year contract. The additional amount in

the first year of the contract will be \$26,668. The additional amount in each of the subsequent two years will be approximately \$41,000 each year.

Mrs. Brotman asked if Budget Committee members had additional questions on the school budget before the Public Hearing moved on. Hearing no further comments or questions, Mrs. Brotman asked if any community members had additional questions on the school budget. Hearing no further comments or questions, Ms. Brotman asked for a motion on the proposed school budget.

Mrs. Glenshaw moved to approve \$5,500,372.38 for the 2012-2013 school budget. Motion Seconded by Mr. Bailey. No further comments or questions were offered at this time. The motion was voted 7 in favor with 1 abstention (Bardos). The motion passed.

4. The Public Hearing for the warrant articles containing money is scheduled for February 15th, 2012. The school will need to have articles ready for review by the Budget Committee and posting prior to the Public Hearing. Mrs. Brotman and Mr. Schiffman will work out the details.

5. Town Budget:

The following topics were reviewed;

- a. Revenues “in lieu of”
- b. Town Poor
- c. Capital Reserve Funds
- d. Highway concerns

Mrs. Roby asked about Second Growth’s budget request and why it was not included in the Selectmen’s proposed budget. Mr. Carr responded there was some concern that this area is being covered by the Town’s Police Department and having comparable services provided by others

Questions concerning the Library budget were again discussed.

Mrs. Brotman asked if Budget Committee members had additional questions on the Town budget. Hearing no further comments or questions, Mrs. Brotman asked if any community members had additional questions or comments on the Town budget. Hearing no further comments or questions, Ms. Brotman asked for a motion on the proposed Town budget.

Mrs. Glenshaw moved to approve \$1,947,350.58 as the 2012 Town budget. Seconded by Mr. Carr. No further comments or questions were offered at this time. The motion was voted 7 in favor and 1 opposed (Bailey). The motion passed.

6. Mrs. Brotman asked if Budget Committee members were interested in forming sub-committees, as suggested by Mr. Strout, to get more in-depth information on the various departments involved in the Town and School budgets. This suggestion was met with

approval by many members. The budget committee will consider the formation of some sub-committees at the February 15th, 2012 meeting.

At 8:53 Mr. Bardos moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Carr. Voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dina Cutting

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 15, 2012, 7 PM – Public Hearing on “Money Warrant Articles” and formation of budget committee sub-committees.