

## Lyndeborough Budget Committee

Tuesday, February 5, 2013

### MINUTES

#### **PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING**

All members were present except for Jeff Schinn.

Committee Chairman Don Guertin opened the hearing at 6:35PM.

The public was provided with a copy of the budget and the Capital Improvement Plan. These are attached to the minutes for reference along with the letter dated 2/4/13 from Lee Mayhew covered in these minutes.

Chairman Guertin spoke briefly to each major section of the operating budget. He noted a 2.5% increase was built into the budget for salaries with 2% being a cost of living increase and the other half percent to be based on performance. Areas highlighted were: Personnel Administration is up due to police retirement costs due to one additional full-time officer and the participation percent increasing, Legal: given the suit with Wilton over the 2010 school tax situation more money was felt necessary, Police: up \$8,000 with most of that due to the desire to share a prosecutor with Wilton (Fred Douglas was present and questioned Selectmen Boette about the vetting process to make that decision), Ambulance: up \$4,000 for our portion of the funding of a new ambulance which they now feel may cost more than planned, Fire Department: the annual \$18,000 for the air packs ( a 5-year lease-purchase) that was a warrant article last year is now part of the operating budget, Highway: the paving portion of the budget was increased by \$25,000 to fund the paving costs within the operating budget rather than with Highway Block Grant money that is needed to fund future road improvements, Heritage: a new amount for the committee was explained.

The warrant articles were covered with most simply continuing funding the Capital Reserve Funds although two will be new (a fire truck and a Highway dump truck). Conversation took place with Lee Mayhew about his two police department related articles. The article to resolve the bridge CRF was explained one more time – it has no budget impact as funds from the accounts being closed will fund the new account.

A letter to the Budget Committee from Lee Mayhew touched on the following points. He suggested turning off some of the street lights and it was agreed the Selectmen's office would investigate. It was suggested police prosecution duties remain in-house rather than sharing them with the Wilton PD. The Board wishes, and the IOC Rance Deware desires to try the arrangement with Wilton. Lee suggested a bonding approach to paving expenses. It is too late

to propose a bond for the coming year. It was agreed that this summer a review would take place to see if bonding would be a better way to cover costs than the current plan. Lastly, he noted that two new capital reserve funds were being started in 2013 and suggested funding only one. It was pointed out these are already deferred from previous years and the CIP going out the next several years does not have the opening he mentions in his letter to start the second one.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:50PM.

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**

The committee met to finalize the budget. Only a few items within the operating budget were covered again. By a 5-4 vote \$615 was added to the Town Clerk budget to fund normal working hours when Trish is on vacation (it had been proposed they be reduced), the increase in the legal budget was approved 7-2, and the police prosecutor was not voted on but members felt the Selectmen needed more justification and Selectmen Boette promised to obtain that. With that accomplished the committee voted 9-0 to approve the operating budget. All warrant articles were supported by 9-0 with the exception of the Highway One-Ton that was approved by 7-2. The petitioned article for \$7,400 to fund a process to replace a police department head received much discussion with Selectman Boette reading a letter from Town Counsel suggesting a tabling of this article. Members voted 3-6 not to support this funding.

It was suggested that because the budget is actually prepared by the Budget Committee they should consider being more involved in the discussion and presentation of the warrant rather than just the Selectmen. It was pointed out that members have always felt free to speak to any article but it is true no explanation has typically been provided when an article is first presented and that at least for the operating budget that should be done by the Chairman. This year, he is also to address the petitioned article vote by the committee. Burton would continue to present a total budget tax impact overview as has been the tradition. Many of the warrant articles are simply funding Capital Reserve Funds and that process has been well understood and supported by the public and thus may not require much explanation. The committee will also sit together up front.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Burton Reynolds