

Town of Lyme
Budget Committee
October 17, 2018
7:00 PM
Town Office/Police Station Conference Room
Approved November 7, 2018

Budget Committee Members: Judy Brotman, Kevin Sahr, Eric Furstenberg, Richard Jones, Elizabeth Glenshaw, Erik Colburg, Cybele Merrick, Wilkes McClave, & Jennifer Boylston. Select Board members Susan MacKenzie and Rusty Keith. Administrative Assistant Dina Cutting. Town Clerk Patty Jenks, Tax Collector Barbara Woodard, Librarian Judith Russell and Library Trustee Beth Taylor. Cemetery Trustees Jay Cary and Laurie Wadsworth.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Chair Brotman.

1. Mr. Jones moved to approve the meeting minutes of October 10th, 2018. Seconded by Mr. McClave. Several minor changes were made for clarification. The minutes were voted 8 in favor with 1 abstention (Ms. Merrick).
2. Town Clerk Patty Jenks reviewed her department's handout. Staffing needs were reviewed and discussed, especially noted was the difficulty in attracting qualified people for part time positions. The possibility of making a combination Assistant Town Clerk-Tax Collector position as a full-time job was discussed. This would need to be a warrant article this year (2019) and the new position would start next year (2020). Various other budget items were reviewed and discussed. Any wage increases are deferred to the Select Board's recommendation.
3. Tax Collector Barbara Woodard also noted the appeal of a combined Tax Collector-Assistant Town Clerk option. Ms. Woodard reviewed busy times vs. slow times for the office. The Deputy Tax Collector is relied on heavily when she is not in the office, which is why she is requesting an increase in stipend/salary from \$850.00 to \$1,500.00. Additionally she reviewed and discussed several other line items. Any wage increases are deferred to the Select Board's recommendation.
4. The Cemetery Trustees are requesting the same bottom line budget again this year. The Highland Cemetery and the Old Cemetery will need some additional work, so they are reducing the equipment repair line to \$500 and adding \$1,000 to the care and maintenance line.
5. Librarian Judy Russell reviewed the new part-time position being proposed as an assistant/clerk. \$13,000 is being requested to fund it. Ms. Russell reviewed all employee positions and their duties and the need for this additional employee. A discussion of instituting late charges for books and CDs took place. The committee also discussed the option of charging out of Town people for a Library card as a source of revenue. The Librarian's salary and requested 5% increase was reviewed. This is the final year in the Library Trustees' multi-year plan to bring the Librarian's salary up to standard for similarly sited Town Libraries.
6. Planning & Zoning - The Committee reviewed the Planning and Zoning budget requests, including a 3% salary increase. The printer/scanner was discussed briefly. The budget

committee requested a brief written explanation of the need and uses for the printer scanner from Dave Robbins, the Planning & Zoning Administrator.

7. Administrative budget/ Legal/Revaluation of Property/ General Government/Insurance/Parks & Recreation/long term loans and bonds – Ms. Cutting reviewed the 30 hour part-time clerk increase to 36 hour full-time in the Executive budget. Various other line items we noted and discussed. Legal will be reviewed and requested by the Select Board. The Town has several pending law suits at present. All wage increases will be addressed by the Select Board.
8. Capital Reserve Funds and Warrant Articles - The Board will be proposing a warrant article for the repair of Dorchester Road. An application has been made for a 75% State-25% Town grant. \$160,000 is estimated to be the Town's share. Baker Hill Road repairs were reviewed and discussed. This repair will need to be addressed in 2019, no estimated amount of funding is available at this time. River Road reroute project was reviewed. Block Grant funding and how this will/should be used was discussed.
9. Vehicle and heavy equipment purchasing - Mr. Colburg reviewed information concerning lease-to-own options and standard financing of purchases. It was the sense of some committee members these are viable options for the Town and further information should be gathered. Renting of specialized equipment was also discussed. The highway department's request for a new chipper was reviewed.
10. Several committee members expressed the desire to see the Select Board's budget broken out with controllable and uncontrollable areas.
11. At this time the budget committee discussed the option of setting a % increase cap for the operating budget. The majority of members felt a 2.7% increase was appropriate in keeping with the New England CIP, but felt it was important to review the warrant article requests at the same time the operating budget was considered. Health care increases will be 10.5% in 2019. Following this discussion Chair Brotman individually polled the committee members. The sense of the budget committee was 8 members felt they would like to see a budget increase of no more than 2.7% including the warrant articles, 1 member did not.

At 9:23 PM Mr. Jones moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Merrick. Voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dina Cutting