

Town of Lyme
Budget Committee
January 9th, 2019
Town Office/Police Station Conference Room

Budget Committee Members: Judy Brotman, Scott May, Cybele Merrick, Kevin Sahr, Elizabeth Glenshaw, Chris Ramsden, Jennifer Boylston, Erik Colburn, Eric Furstenburg, and Richard Jones.

Select Board members: Rusty Keith & Sue MacKenzie.

School Superintendent/Principal: Jeff Valence.

School Board member Matthew Hayden.

Librarian: Judy Russell.

Community members: David and Barbra Roby & Andrea Colgan

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by Chair Brotman.

1. Mr. Valance reviewed various items, and discussed the controllable and non-controllable sections of the School budget' and reviewed the spreadsheet presented at the meeting:
 - 3 new employees- \$78,000
 - Salary and benefit increase- \$77,000
 - Contracted budget items- \$17,000
 - High School-\$33,000
 - Special Ed-\$34,000
 - Staple increases (Oil, cleaning etc.) -\$6,000
 - One-time costs- \$29,000- not every year budget item-Legal increase for negotiations-advertising, etc.
 - Strategic increases- \$16,000 computer, design lab, field trips etc.
 - Facility renovations- \$31,000
 - Full time Counselor- \$49,000 this year it is Grant funded but next year it is not
 - Reviewed what the renovation projects are going to be in the lower school.
 - Reviewed the staffing and changes in the budget. Will be a 1 FTE increase.
2. A general discussion of how to make sure we are spending carefully, while trying to stay innovative and not get stagnant followed.
3. The proposed budget is \$7,431,360 – this is a proposed operational change of 5.3% increase. This is different than the impact on the tax rate, which is projected to be 2.3%. Mr. Valance reviewed past practice of saving funds by having professionals doing jobs in the school. The school makes every effort to operate as economically as possible.
4. The budget committee reviewed and discussed various budget factors, including:
 - The dilemma is the budget increase has been 4-5% each year.
 - This is a high performing school, with a low student teacher ratio.
 - There is a higher-than-average cost per student, making the school expensive.
 - The quality of the school gives a high value of the town, however the school cost is increasing more than the cost of living.

- We all share in the concern and the struggle of paying taxes.

Mr. Valance was concerned that when the school does deliver a lower budget those things are not acknowledged. Ms. Glenshaw noted the pride the kids have in the school. There is a need to get the word out about the positive things the school is doing and the great things the kids are doing. Standardized testing is not the best way to showcase the schools' successful programs. Mr. Valance noted that Lyme high school graduates have a 98% college placement rate. Consistently the receiving high schools seek out Lyme students. Each high school has had Lyme kids that have been valedictorians.

5. School Budget: The budget committee reviewed questions concerning the budget and funding. Mr. Jones moved to approve the amount of \$ 7,431,360 as a sense of the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Glenshaw.

Yes- 6 (Mr. Furstenberg, Mr. Colberg, Mrs. Boylston, Ms. Glenshaw, Mr. Sahr and Mr. May)

No- 3 (Mr. Ramsden, Ms. Merrick (who suggest reducing the renovation costs) and Mr. Jones.)

The Sense of the meeting motion passed by a vote of 6-3.

6. Town Budget: Mr. Jones recommended removing the \$13,000 for a new Library position from the proposed budget. Librarian Judy Russell reviewed the need for this position, which is to providing assistance to Judy so she can do more administrative duties. 20 hours at a base rate seemed like the best way to fill this position. In doing this the Library did not raise any other lines in their 2019 proposed budget.

Mr. Jones Moved the town budget in the amount of \$2,335,558.00 as a sense of the meeting (reducing the Library budget by \$13,000). Seconded by Scott May.

Yes – 5 (Mr. Jones, Mr. Colberg, Mr. Frustenberg, Mr. May and Ms. Bolyston)

No- 4 (Mr. Ramsden, Mr. Sahr, Ms. Merrick and Ms. Glenshaw)

Public comments were made. Concerns were noted with removing the \$13,000 from the Library budget. Ms. Russell reviewed the work the Library does with children during after school hours. The Library supplies many programs for children in our town. The town is growing, the needs of the Library are growing. We can not keep the same amount of staff with the usage increases. After Ms. Russell reviewed the Library needs a budget committee member requested a re-vote on the proposed budget. The following vote was recorded: In favor of the Town budget as proposed by the Selectboard (including the \$13,000) in the amount of \$2,348,558.00.

No- 4 (Mr. Jones, Mr. Colberg, Mr. Frustenberg and Mr. May).

Yes - 5 (Ms. Boylston, Mr. Ramsden, Mr. Sahr, Ms. Merrick and Ms. Glenshaw)

Motion passed.

7. The budget committee reviewed possible warrant articles:

School – none anticipated.

Town - Dorchester Road - \$155,000

 Baker Hill Road - \$70,000

Goose Pond Road - engineering-culvert work- \$160,000

At 9:10PM Mr. Jones moved to adjourn, Seconded by Ms. Glenshaw. Voted unanimously.

Respectfully, Dina Cutting

Next Meeting January 23, 7 PM, Public Hearing on Town and School operating budgets.