Town of Lyme
Budget Committee
October 14th, 2026

Present for all or part of the meeting:
Budget Committee Members: Richard Jones, Phil Kinsler, Rich Brown, Bill Malcolm, Stacey Summerfield, Hebe Quinton, School Board rep. Fielding Essensa, Brian Spence, Jennifer Boylston (via zoom)
Administrator: Dina Cutting, Jordan Gray
Town Staff: Jordan Gray, Road Agent Scott Bailey, Police Chief Swett, Fire Chief Breton
Community members (via zoom): Susan MacKenzie, Sean (no last name displayed), phone # (no name displayed)
Community members present: Aaron Rich

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Richard Jones.

1. Mr. Kinsler moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of Wednesday September 16th, 2026. Mr. Malcolm seconded. Mr. Malcolm noted that in number 8 the spelling of his name should be corrected. Voted 7 in favor and Mr. Spence abstained as he was not present at that meeting.
2. Road Agent, Scott Bailey, came before the Budget Committee to review the Highway Department proposed budget.
    a. There are currently three full-time highway employees, but the budget reflects four full-time positions, as there is still an open position.
    b. The only planned upgrade to major equipment this coming year is an F-550.
    c. There has been a $2.00 per yard increase in the bids for gravel. Mr. Bailey has kept the budgeted line item the same, but stated we will need to think about increasing it the following year. Another item to keep in mind is that salt prices have also increased to $10/$12 a ton**.**
    d. There has been no change in the budgeted fuel line. We get fuel from Dead River at rack price. It is always a hard item to project because it is dependent on the type of winter we have, but Mr. Bailey is trying to be conservative with his budget increase.
    e. Contracted services include external companies for grading in the summer and a one-ton operator in the winter.
    f. Mr. Bailey brought a list of future projects - see attached.
3. Police Chief Swett came before the Budget Committee to review the Police Department proposed budget.
    a. The increase in the uniforms/equipment line is due to some upgrades needing to happen. For example, their fire arm holsters are peeling. They have tried to repair them, but it has been determined they need to be replaced. The Police Department does not have proper court attire and the courts prefer a more professional look rather than their duty uniforms.
    b. The budget reflects two full-time officers and one very part-time officer if needed.
    c. The Police Department is due to replace the Ford Explorer cruiser. Chief Swett is in the process of getting prices. This purchase would be paid from the capital reserve fund. The budget also reflects an increase in pricing of tires for both the

cruisers. Prices for oil and gas prices have also increased, so Chief Swett has increased those lines accordingly.

4. Fire Chief Dan Breton came before the Budget Committee to review the Fire Department proposed budget.
    a. The increase to the telephone line is due to the fact that the department is wanting to add Starlink into an engine. Having Starlink is the only way they are able to have reliable service in parts of town and many surrounding towns are also using this or looking into it.
    b. The increase in the breathing apparatus line is due to the face that NH DOT requires quarterly air testing, which has added an extra $1,200.00 per year.
    c. The administration line includes funds to pay volunteers to complete the required reporting for every incident they go to. Mr. Jones inquired about the previous discussion had on hiring a part-time secretary to share with the Town Office to complete this task. Chief Breton explained that it was determined this would not work effectively for the Fire Department, as it is beneficial to have someone who has experience in the field to complete the reports.
    d. The new fire truck will be funded by a combination of capital reserve fund, loan and/or donation.
    e. Emergency Management and Forest Fire lines are both budgeted at $1,500.00.
5. Ambulance contract: The numbers have not come in yet for this budget item.
6. Mr. Malcolm noted that these proposals show a substantial higher increase than CPI. As discussed in the past some increases are out of departments control, but overtime this causes a budgetary problem. Mrs. Cutting reported that the Select Board has this in mind and is aiming to keep the budget increase between 3.7% - 4.1%.
7. Mr. Malcolm also shared concerns about the number of meetings between the Budget Committee and the School. He is concerned this does not give enough time for an informed and effective conversation. He proposes we add more meetings to the schedule for the school. School Board Rep. Mr. Essensa stated he doesn't believe that the school board is against more open communication, but there are some legislative votes that may affect the timeline. The school is also just in the beginning of union negotiations, so the Budget Committee should be aware of those components.
8. The idea of having the Town and School on the same fiscal year was briefly brought to discussion. Mrs. Cutting is going to gather more information on this topic and bring it before the committee.
9. At 8:01 PM Mr. Brown moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Kinsler. Voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Jordan Gray