

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BUDGET REVIEWS – FY 2014-2015
Monday, MARCH 24th, 2014**

Members In Attendance: Steve Kelley, Chairman
Lisa Picarazzi, Secretary
Camille Alberti
Steve Carpenteri
Steve Harney
Beth Hogan

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
april 1 20 14 AT 2:30 AM/PM
Kathleen Balkaran
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also In Attendance: Paul Formica, First Selectman
Anna Johnson, Finance Director
Gary Goeschel, Planning Director, IWA Officer
Marc Salerno, Zoning Commission Chairman
William Mulholland, Zoning Official
John McDonald, Chief, Niantic Fire Department
Jim Levandoski, Chief, Flanders Fire Department
Dick Morris, Fire Marshal, Emergency Management

Absent: No One

A. Call Special Meeting to Order

Chairman Kelley called this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 6:30 PM.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was observed.

C. Delegations

Mr. Kelley called for Delegations.

There were none.

D. New Business

a. Budget Reviews – FY 2014 - 2015

◆ **Planning Department & Commission (117) – Gary Goeschel, Planning Director**

Mr. Formica recalled that they had combined the combined Planning Department and Commission and the increase has to do with the salary. He explained that this is a four day position and that Mr. Goeschel is the Inland Wetlands Officer to complete the week. He said that Mr. Goeschel was present if they had any questions.

Ms. Hogan asked if the COLA was being put into the figure.

Mr. Formica said that Ms. Johnson puts it in during the last quarter and that the 6.31% is not accurate.

Mr. Kelley asked about the \$61,019.

Ms. Johnson said that the actual figure falls somewhere in-between the two numbers that they see.

Mr. Formica said that he thinks that they should do the salary transfer so that the figures in the books are correct as the 6.31% is confusing. He noted that there is a COLA every year with a step increase added to that every other year.

◆ **Inland Wetlands Agency (132) – Gary Goeschel, IWA Officer**

Mr. Formica explained that Mr. Goeschel is also the Wetlands Officer and that this is 20% of his salary. They were requesting an increase however he reversed it back as he could not justify increasing one person when he felt that all of them deserved an increase.

Mr. Kelley said that the budget after the adjustment is up by \$150.

◆ **Zoning Commission (116) – Marc Salerno, Zoning Commission Chairman, William Mulholland, Zoning Official**

Mr. Formica noted that the salary adjustment would be the same here and added that Mr. Salerno may be here to discuss the new Consultants line item that the Board of Selectmen had reduced from \$4000 to \$2000. He added that so far they have not had to use it. Last year they took it out and this year they left it at the \$2000.

Mr. Salerno said that he thinks that the \$2000 should meet their needs. This is an 'in case' item as he thinks that at some point they may need to have a traffic study done for one of the applications that they receive.

◆ **Ledge Light Health District (108) – Steve Mansfield, Deputy Director LLHD & Paul Formica**

Mr. Formica explained that this is based per capita and that it went up by 10 cents per person to \$6.98 per person from the previous \$6.88. The population figure of 18,892 includes the prison population. He added that Ledge Light pays the Town for a room downstairs in the Land Use area and that we provide office support for them there.

Ms. Hogan asked for an update on what they have been doing.

Mr. Mansfield said that the regional health district includes New London, Groton, Ledyard, Waterford and East Lyme. They have been involved with communicable disease education amongst a number of other interesting areas. Baker Salisbury, Director recently did a Lyme disease presentation.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if the per capita rate is the same for every Town.

Mr. Mansfield said yes.

◆ **Niantic Fire Department (217) – John McDonald, Niantic Chief**

Mr. Formica noted that the increase in the salary line item is not posted as they are in labor negotiations. He noted that the cost for fuels is being offset through the generosity of the Ambulance Association.

Mr. Kelley said that the PT and Overtime line items are about 27% of the regular salary line and they are increasing next year by \$12,000 without the negotiated raises – he asked when it becomes more cost effective to increase the FT so that the PT and Overtime line items come down.

Chief McDonald said that right now they do stagger personnel and shifts. The FT people work a nine hour day so they get one hour of overtime. The overtime line item is for call backs for fires so this really is the 'luck of the draw' so to speak. The PT's fill in for the FT people and they also work nights from 5 to 11PM and weekends 8AM to 3PM and 3PM to 11PM so that there is coverage for vehicles to get right out the door for calls. If they were to hire a FT person, they could not cover all of the stations with people.

Ms. Picarazzi thanked them for all that they do and asked what percentage of Overtime is contractual.

Mr. McDonald said that there is an hour each day and also when they add an extra shift – that has to go to the FT's first.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she echoed Mr. Kelley's comments as the Overtime rate is 1.5 times the regular rate.

Mr. Formica said that they would look at this during contract negotiations.

Mr. Kelley thanked them for all that they do to keep the Town safe.

◆ **Flanders Fire Department (218) - Jim Levandoski, Flanders Fire Chief**

Mr. Formica said that this is much the same situation as the Niantic Fire Department.

Chief Levandoski said that he thinks that when you compare the pay and full benefit package of the FT's and if you look at if you want someone coming from their homes for an emergency rather than from the fire station to answer that emergency call that this seems the better way at this time.

Mr. Kelley said that the question was when it becomes more cost effective.

Mr. Levandoski said that it is difficult to answer and noted that Sgt. Blanchette also could not answer that question when asked. They are all in the same situation.

Ms. Hogan asked about the radios as she had thought that Emergency Management was taking care of that system.

Mr. Levandoski said that it is a battery issue – they are all five years old and they are all going and need to be replaced.

Ms. Alberti asked about training.

Mr. Levandoski said that he tries to cover it as he can with the PT and FT people.

Mr. Formica said that they built the meeting room at the Field Services building so that they could host some of those sessions here and get one free from time to time.

Mr. Kelley thanked them for all that they do for the Town.

◆ **Emergency Management (224) – Dick Morris, Fire Marshal**

Mr. Formica noted that he had removed the fifth dispatcher as the negotiations are moving forward with the three Towns. Those numbers are adjusted. The rest of the increases are for phones and training.

Ms. Alberti asked Mr. Morris and Ms. Johnson about the 5% increase for the Director and it is the same issue of not being moved.

Ms. Johnson said yes.

Ms. Alberti asked how that could be fixed to reflect the accurate amount.

Ms. Johnson said if they did the increases before the fiscal year starts or if the transfers were done before the budget session starts it would be reflected correctly.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the Overtime line item showing an increase of 21.63%.

Mr. Morris said that it is contractual and that when people take their time off that they have to fill it with a FT person - which is overtime. He said that he had projected a need for 28 days and that it went over. The contract calling for this to be done this way has another two years to it.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if it would be worth doing some cost benefit analysis for some of these budgets with the overtime and the way that it is handled due to contract.

Mr. Harney asked about training and miscellaneous supplies.

Mr. Morris said that training is \$150 per person and they send three people for certification which includes mileage which gets costly. There is also Fire Marshal certification and he has a few going to 911 training school. The miscellaneous supplies are for paper, printer cartridges, computers and data.

Mr. Kelley thanked them for all that they do.

◆ **Animal Control (226) – presented by Paul Formica**

Mr. Formica explained that this budget represents 50% of what it costs for the Animal Control Agent who is a police officer in Waterford. This person may or may not be in this position as they are a 20 year person and they may retire and come back as other than a police officer. They are also looking at a new facility. East Lyme currently provides the van and Waterford the facility. Dominion has been very kind in providing \$25,000 to offset the cost of the van. Waterford has raised over \$120,000 for a new facility and they have been working between Waterford and New London as New London had a tree come through their facility in a storm. He noted that they approached Corrigan in Montville about building a new facility on the outskirts of their facility by the inmates there as they have the talents to do that type of work. The facility would then be maintained by those same inmates with each Town also having their own animal control officer to bring the animals in and to do the processing and to also work with the public. If this were to go forward the \$120,000 would go far as the labor would not be the issue. They already have an extensive animal rehabilitation program there. They have been involved in discussions on this and if it were to go forward – it would be an opportunity to stabilize the costs. For now, the figure that they are seeing here is what it is. He said that he would keep them posted as discussions continue.

◆ **Services to Community (115) – presented by Paul Formica**

Mr. Formica noted that these items have been kept at the same level and reviewed the list. He noted that we have a growing homeless population here in Town. The numbers shown here are as they were requested by the organization itself.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she thinks that they are worthwhile causes and that they should support them.

Mr. Kelley noted for everyone that on April 12th that TVCCA is having their annual fundraiser for senior nutrition at the Port n' Starboard. The chefs do the cooking for free. The event costs \$45 per person and it is a wonderful event for a great cause. He said that he also wanted to disclose that he is the East Lyme representative on the TVCCA Board.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she would suggest increasing some of these figures if they could – for TVCCA and Safe Futures to start. She disclosed that she is on the Board of safe Futures.

Ms. Hogan said that they are all worthwhile causes and that she works with not for profit organizations.

Mr. Formica noted that TVCCA does return some dollars to the Senior Center and that perhaps they could suggest that they keep those dollars and that would represent a larger donation without having to go to the taxpayers. He also suggested that there is no reason why this Town could not do a fundraiser like Mr. Buscetto does in New London each year and then dole out the proceeds to various organizations as he does. They could hold it outside at perhaps McCook's or inside at a restaurant. This is something to think about.

E. Public Discussion

Mr. Kelley called for any comments from the Public.
There was no Public Discussion.

F. Board Comments

Mr. Kelley asked if the Board members had any comments.
There were none.

G. Adjournment

****MOTION (1)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 7:40 PM.
Ms. Hogan seconded the motion.
Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary