

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
AFTER PUBLIC HEARING
Monday, APRIL 21~~st~~, 2014**

20, 2015

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

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
Apr 30, 2015 AT 10:00 AM/PM
DeLloyd Blair
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also In Attendance: Mark Nickerson, First Selectman
Tim Hagen, Chairman, Board of Ed
Jeff Newton, Superintendent of Schools
Anna Johnson, Finance Director

Absent: No One

A. Call Special Meeting to Order

Chairman Harney called this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 8:52 PM after the previously scheduled Public Hearing on the Proposed FY15/16 Budget.

B. Deliberations & Action to Send Proposed FY 15-16 Budget to Town Meeting on May 11, 2015

Mr. Harney said that they had completed the Public Hearing process and heard comments. He noted that Ms Johnson had a few things to say on some reductions.

Ms. Johnson said that AHEPA and Twin Haven had been figured at 100% and the correct value is 66%; with this in mind she said that she would like to propose reducing the \$750,000 to \$650,000 from fund balance as they had lowered it significantly and had to make a special appropriation of \$146,000 from it. While she expects that they will make some of it up she said that she would like to keep it consistent as this is what they look for when going out for bonding.

Ms. Picarazzi asked what it would bring the undesignated fund balance to.
Ms. Johnson said that it will get us closer to the 8%.

Mr. Harney asked what the AHEPA adjustment brings in.
Ms. Johnson said that comes to \$63,000. She said that she also would like to reduce the CNRE – Town Projects by \$25,000 from \$75,000 to \$50,000.

Mr. Harney called for a motion on the reduction.

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. Kelley moved to reduce the CNRE for 2015/2016 (Town-wide Projects) by \$25,000 from \$75,000 to \$50,000.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

****MOTION (2)**

Mr. Kelley moved to forward to the Annual Town Meeting on May 11, 2015 the FY 2015/2016 proposed budget with a 3.12% increase (Total FY15/16 proposed budget - \$67,145,328).

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Ms. Hogan said she is of the opinion that if the BOE would work on restoring the inequity of the teachers that she would propose to restore \$100,000 to their budget.

Mr. Kelley said that he thinks that this enters into trying to do a line item overview of their budget and they cannot do that.

Ms. Picarazzi agreed and said that there is no way that they could get a guarantee and while she appreciates Ms. Hogan's intent – she feels that it infringes on their charter.

Ms. Alberti said that if she sees that certain steps are taken to adjust the inequities in the system that she may be inclined to grant more.

Mr. Carpenteri asked if they could come back here later if they do something.

Ms. Picarazzi said that in your personal household that you have to decide how to spend the funds that you have – as such here – where the dollars go is a BOE decision and if the teachers are a priority then they need to make it so themselves.

Mr. Harney said that it is a process change and something for them to work on.

Mr. Kelley said that he does not want to be on the slope that says 'if you do this, we will do that' as you do not know what the economic climate will be in the future.

Mr. Harney said that it is not for them to micro-manage the BOE budget and called for a vote on the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

C. Discussion & Possible Action on the Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Harney noted that they had split the reval bill and changed and modified the vehicle acquisition program. No adjustments were made to the CNRE for the BOE.

Mr. Kelley said that last year they paid for the lights for the tennis courts in with the tennis courts and here they are being asked to pay for tennis court lights again. When this was approved the Town Hall was full of people and the people said that if included the lights. He said that he does not understand why people are not out knocking on doors asking for a donation for the lights just as they do for the sports with the coupons for \$20. He thinks that it would at least be a show of good faith to raise some of this \$105,000.

Mr. Nickerson said that he agrees with Mr. Kelley as they were told that the \$750,000 included the lights.

Ms. Picarazzi said that it concerns her that when they earmark money for a specific item (such as this, the tennis courts and lights) that it goes for something else. She asked how they control this. Wouldn't it have been better when they ran into trouble to come back and ask for an appropriation or how to handle this rather than to just spend the money on something that it was not earmarked for?

Mr. Nickerson said that he was not sure how it happened but that it would not happen on his watch as it is not an appropriate thing to do.

Mr. Harney said that it would have been appropriate for them to at least have gone and solicited \$30,000 of the \$105,000.

Ms. Picarazzi asked what they can do to assure that the funds go to the earmarked item and are not used for something else as this went through Town Meeting approval.

Mr. Nickerson agreed and said that the voters were voting on a \$750,000 product and they did not get it.

Ms. Alberti said that it seems that it happens on the Town side as well and that she would look for an example. She further suggested that they get some legal advice on how not to have this happen in the future.

Mr. Nickerson said that they also need better communications.

Mr. Harney asked if they were ready to make a motion.

****MOTION (3)**

Mr. Kelley moved to approve the FY 2015/2016 CNRE as presented with the above made adjustment of a reduction of \$25,000 to Town-wide Projects from \$75,000 to \$50,000.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

D. Public Discussion

Mr. Harney called for Public Discussion.

Ron Rando, 194 Boston Post Road said that he had cited all of these issues before but no one would listen – he recommended to them that they would have a problem with the tennis courts as water runs beneath them and they were wasting their money; he warned them about the swimming pool ceiling and they had nothing but problems there and he warned them about the Boardwalk and thinks that this one will also wash out. They do not need all of those people in the higher echelon of the schools – they have to look at saving money or it is going to come back to bite them.

Mike Schulz, Lovers Lane said that if he recalls correctly; what Mr. Kelley said about a drive for the lights; he remembers that artificial turf was supposed to have had a fund raising drive – they had the flyer design and all – then it went to bonding and we paid for all of it. There is a snake in the grass here, so be careful. Cut out the nonsense.

Tim Hagen, 309 Boston Post Road thanked them for all their hard work and said that having more dialogue with the Board of Finance is a great idea. They brought all day kindergarten which is a fantastic program and they had to add seven (7) more teachers to do it. Dialogue will help to try to fix the perceived inequities. They will see more to hem this coming year.

Ron Rando, 194 Boston Post Road reminded them that all they can do with the BOE is to cut the bottom line – they can't touch the line items. He also asked that they think of everyone who lives in Town.

E. Board Comments

Mr. Harney called for comments from the Board.

Mr. Kelley said that this is his sixth year on this Board and that he knows that everyone on the Board spends as much time on the budget as he does. He sees their work here as a couple of jobs – they don't want to have to reduce services to the people of the Town and they have to look at everyone – the Water & Sewer bills went up last year by \$120; electric bills went up substantially – take a good look at your bill as it has increased greatly and it affects everyone in the Town. They have to try to consider everyone and balance all factors. He also thanked all of his fellow board members and Ms. Johnson for all that she does and for keeping on top of everything for them.

Ms. Picarazzi thanked everyone also and said that it is not easy and they do spend a lot of time going through everything – but they are all one community.

Ms. Hogan said that she enjoys working with all of them and looks forward to them continuing to work together.

Ms. Alberti said that when she looks at the increases in the areas that while 2.97% seems low – the BOE budget represents 66% of the Town's budget and that is a huge share of the whole budget. They also need to look at this over the many years as a continuum as it all adds up to a substantial amount.

Mr. Harney thanked everyone for their different opinions and spirited discussions.

Mr. Nickerson noted that the Annual Town Meeting on the budget is Monday, May 11, 2015 at 7 PM in the high School Auditorium and the referendum on the budget is Thursday, May 21, 2015.

F. Adjournment

****MOTION (4)**

Mr. Kelley moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 9:40 PM.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary