

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
BUDGET REVIEWS – FY 2015-2016  
Monday, MARCH 23rd, 2015**

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

FILED IN EAST LYME  
CONNECTICUT  
March 31, 2015 AT 1:17 AM/PM  
*Bridget J. Oliver*  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

**Also In Attendance:** Mark Nickerson, First Selectman  
Anna Johnson, Finance Director  
Gary Goeschel, Planning Director, IWA Officer  
Matthew Walker, 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:** Camille Alberti

**A. Call Special Meeting to Order**

Chairman Harney 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. Harney called for Delegations.

Karen Rak, 27 Black Point Rd. said that she was not here to ask for anything but just to say that every year they ask for more and more and that means that there is less and less for her and her family. She asked that there be no increases across the board and that there be no increases for the Board of Ed – just keep the budget flat. Some reasons – the Federal debt is in the trillions of dollars and this is everyone's debt; the velocity of the M2 money stock since the recession has fallen and continues to go down; home ownership is at a 20 year low; the civilian employment population ratio was at 63% prior to the recession, at 59% during the recession and is still at 59%; food prices have risen constantly and the real median household income has taken a dive – 39% earn less than \$20,000/yr; 52% earn less than \$30,000/yr, 63% earn less than \$40,000/yr and 72% earn less than \$50,000 per yr and the use of SNAP and other federal benefits have increased dramatically. She said that what they are looking at is not a bare bones budget – some instances: BOS budget has a line item increase of 66.67%; other depts. showing significant increases are: Town Clerk; Community Services, Finance, Contingency, Board of Finance (audit increase of 14.29%), Inland Wetlands 5.7% increase, Smith Harris (the curator was supposed to be paid for by the Friends of Smith Harris), Harbor Management – a 32% increase....she said that she could keep going but thinks that they get the idea and that they have a lot to do to get to flat funding.

**D. New Business**

**a. Budget Reviews – FY 2015 - 2016**

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

Mr. Goeschel explained that the additional person for GIS did not go forward so that is a zero. Line 215 is the GIS vendor and that is showing an increase due to the new contract. Line 320 - Misc. supplies was increased by \$50 as it has typically been at the max by the time the end of the year arrives.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the 12.3% increase for the GIS vendor for maintenance and if they 'push back' when they look for that type of increase.

Mr. Goeschel said that they asked why the increase was so large and were told that they have personnel and staffing issues also. Further, they recently went to a new platform and that cost more so they passed some of that on also. He said that he is working with the Assessor on shopping around for another vendor. He added that the service has not been as good from this vendor since they lost an employee to a Town.

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

Mr. Goeschel said that he would answer any questions that they might have.

Mr. Kelley asked what they use their consultant for (line 243 - \$3000).

Mr. Goeschel said that the \$3000 is technically a pass-through and that with a complex application the Commission may find it warrants outside review so this account is used and the applicant is charged back for the cost of the outside review.

Mr. Harney noted that this is also done in the Zoning budget.

Ms. Johnson added that they have corresponding revenue for the \$3000. If this were not put into the budget, they would have to come in for a special appropriation for the money and this would require more time to get through the Boards for approval.

◆ **Zoning Commission (116) – Matthew Walker, Zoning Commission Chairman, William Mulholland, Zoning Official**

Mr. Mulholland introduced Matthew Walker, the Zoning Commission Chairman and said that the budget is basically flat. He noted that the revenue stream is up this year. This is due to the larger projects that have come in around Town such as: Gateway, Main Street, Hope Street and recently Village Crossing. He said that the Zoning Commission also doubles as the Aquifer Protection Agency.

Mr. Nickerson asked if all the Gateway fees have been paid.

Mr. Mulholland said that all of the apartment buildings and club house fees have been paid.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if they could count on the same revenue for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Mulholland said that it would probably be more in line with what they used to see and he has projected it as such.

◆ **Ledge Light Health District (108) – Steve Mansfield, Director LLHD**

Mr. Mansfield said that he had worked for Ledge Light for 17 years now and has been the Director for just over a month now. The fee is based per capita and is showing a 2.4% increase over the current year. (\$6.98 to \$7.15 pp) The primary increase is due to personnel contractual who received a 2.5% increase. He said that they have worked to keep the increases low.

Ms. Picarazzi noted the chart that had been provided and asked about the reduced per capita rate in FY2012.

Mr. Mansfield said that was a particularly difficult year and the member municipalities asked for a break so LLHD went to a contingency fund that they maintain and used some of those funds to provide relief to the member municipalities.

Mr. Harney asked what the reaction/feedback has been this year regarding the increase.

Mr. Mansfield said that he has only been to a few budget sessions so far this year and will be leaving here to attend another one – but so far the reaction has been positive.

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

Mr. Nickerson said that this budget is fairly straight forward. He noted that the OSHAL line item was reduced by the board of selectmen from \$17,000 to \$13,000 as they are looking for OSHA to do all of the same certifications at the same time.

Mr. McDonald said that he has spoken with Mr. Levandoski, Flanders Fire Chief and they contacted some other companies who inspect ladders and hoses and were able to come in with a better price and they will do both of the departments at the same time.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if the \$13,000 is going to cover it.  
Mr. McDonald said yes.

Ms. Picarazzi asked why the salary increases are 6%.  
Mr. McDonald said that it is contractual.

Ms. Johnson explained that it is actually for two (2) years as the increase came after the year had started.

Ms. Hogan asked why radio maintenance went down.

Mr. McDonald explained that they needed a lot of radio batteries last year so they purchased them and that enabled them to lower it this year as they have them.

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

Mr. Nickerson noted the OSHA line where the Board of Selectmen had reduced the \$18,000 requested to the \$13,875 that they have for this year. He asked if Mr. Levandoski concurs.

Mr. Levandoski said that they have to start somewhere and see what they can do. He also noted that he requested a two band radio that can be used here and also to talk with Waterford for emergencies.

Mr. Kelley inquired about the \$1.3M request for a new ladder truck in the CIP and asked what is wrong with the current one – realizing that it is 24 years old – but of low mileage.

Mr. Levandoski said that when he sends it out for certification that it is not going to pass. It then costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to fix or replace the ladder so that it will pass. He further explained that over many years they have had an account that was supposed to be funded each year for this purchase however; the money has been taken out, funding reduced or put off.

Mr. Kelley asked what the after market value is on our ladder truck.

Mr. Levandoski said that it would be used for scrap metal. He added that our last two retired trucks went to South America.

Mr. Harney noted that they had replaced the Niantic one a few years ago and asked about the old one.

Mr. McDonald said that the old one went to Tennessee to a mine and that they got \$8000 for it.

Mr. Kelley asked if they have ever gone on-line to look into used fire trucks as he has and there are a million of them out there.

Mr. Levandoski said that a good question to ask about them is why people are getting rid of them.

Mr. Nickerson noted the fuel costs for both fire departments and said that the diesel costs are paid for by the Ambulance Association; this comes to around \$10,000 for each department and that is a substantial savings to the Town.

The Board thanked both departments for all that they do for the Town.

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

Mr. Nickerson said that this is pretty straight forward also.

Mr. Morris said that not too much has changed and anything that has is contractual.

Mr. Harney asked about the PT Dispatchers line increase of 12.47% to \$133,776.

Mr. Morris said that they have to cover for vacations and other time off.

Ms. Picarazzi asked what is different this year versus last year.

Mr. Morris said that there is more work and more hour, more inspections of motels, hotels, condos, etc. He said that some of this is created by the contracts and they have to make sure that the center is covered.

Ms. Picarazzi asked what they should be doing if they are seeing an increase in this budget of 14% in 2 years time.

Mr. Morris said that they had to add for a CAD program and cameras and the maintenance on them.

Mr. Kelley asked what line item cameras falls under.  
Mr. Morris said that it is under Line 320 – Miscellaneous supplies.

◆ **Animal Control (226) – presented by Mark Nickerson**

Mr. Nickerson explained that this budget represents 50% of what it costs for the Animal Control Agent who is a police officer in Waterford. We pay for the vehicle and they provide the facility. Miscellaneous supplies are for the vet costs and the uniform which we split with Waterford. There has been some preliminary discussion with Waterford about possibly having a deputized citizen as the animal control officer. He said that he would keep them posted if and as any discussions continue.

◆ **Services to Community (115) – presented by Mark Nickerson**

Mr. Nickerson noted that these items have been kept at the same level and reviewed the list. He noted that the newer one is the Sexual Assault request and that was increased by \$100 to \$600.

**E. Public Discussion**

Mr. Harney called for any comments from the Public.

Karen Rak, 27 Black Point Rd. said that as they could see – some of the line items are excessive with a 25%+ increase. She suggested that they need to look at what we do for the citizens as perhaps we do too much and there are organizations that can take some of this over. She said that this is her opinion and that it is not the Town's business to entertain or re-create and that she can find things to do for herself and her family. We have the Board of Ed, Parks & Recreation, Senior Center and Youth Services that provide all kinds of programs/entertainment for people and she thinks that when the Town does this that it takes away from initiative and businesses that could be creative and provide other outlets. Further, all of the people of the Town are paying for this and all of them may not want to do this. Many people do find their own things to do.

**F. Board Comments**

Mr. Harney asked if the Board members had any comments.

Mr. Harney noted that at their next meeting that the Board of Ed will present their budget. He said that Dr. Lombardo asked to have any questions that they have before the meeting – so please forward them.

Mr. Nickerson noted that with respect to public comment about some of the items going up – some of them also had a corresponding revenue increase.

Mr. Kelley asked about any updates from the State.

Mr. Nickerson said that the State will probably be down to the wire with figures.

Mr. Kelley said that he would like the Superintendent to discuss the teacher evaluations and the people that they wanted to hire for that and where they stand on the evaluations at this time.

Ms. Hogan asked about the revenue from the Chinese program and what they are doing with it.

**G. Adjournment**

**\*\*MOTION (1)**

Ms. Hogan moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 7:57 PM.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,  
Recording Secretary