

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BUDGET REVIEWS
Monday, MARCH 18th, 2013**

Members In Attendance: Raymond Hart, Chairman
Steve Harney, Secretary
Steve Carpenteri
Steve Kelley
Lisa Picarazzi

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
March 25, 2013 AT 10:00 AM/PM
Bruce D. Formica ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also In Attendance: Anna Johnson, Finance Director
Donna Bekech, Assessor
John McCulloch, Tax Collector
Joe Smith, Chief Building Official
Renee Fecteau, Human Resources
Cathy Wilson, Senior Services Director
Sgt. Wm. Blanchette, Police, Resident Trooper

Absent: No One

A. Call Special Meeting to Order

Chairman Hart called this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 6:30 PM. He noted that Mr. Formica was expected to arrive later.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was observed.

C. Delegations

Mr. Hart called for Delegations.

There were none.

D. New Business

a. Budget Reviews – FY 2013 - 2014

Mr. Hart explained the procedure stating that Mr. Formica and the department head will give the presentation and then the Board will ask any questions that they may have. They would follow the same procedure as in previous years, opening and closing discussion on the individual departments.

◆ **Assessor (102) – Donna Bekech, Assessor**

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. Kelley moved to open the budget review for Item 102 – Assessor.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Ms. Johnson explained that when the budget was originally submitted that the non-union COLA had not yet been approved.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she had noticed that in some instances that the department heads rates were much higher and asked why.

Ms. Johnson said that they receive a 2.5% step increase every other year and in this instance they also received a 2.5% COLA which comes to 5%.

Mr. Carpenteri asked about the Service Contracts line item and why it went down.
Ms. Johnson said that it is tied to the vendors programs that they use and that the First Selectman reduced it by \$500 as they had just completed a major reval.

****MOTION (2)**

Mr. Kelley moved to close the budget review for Item 102 - Assessor.
Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Tax Collector (103) – John McCulloch, Tax Collector**

****MOTION (3)**

Mr. Carpenteri moved to open the budget review for Item 103 – Tax Collector.
Mr. Kelley seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart noted that Mr. McCulloch was present and asked for an update.

Mr. McCulloch explained that the decrease in book binding is due to the fact that last year it was higher as they had to catch up and do two years at once. They are now caught up. The current collection rate is 97.41% which is down about 16/100's of a percentage point from last year. He said that he is proposing to add a \$2 fee on top of interest for delinquent taxes and is working with the Attorney on how this would be done.

MOTION (4)

Mr. Harney moved to close the budget review for Item 103 Tax Collector.
Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Board of Assessment Appeals (127) – Donna Bekech, Assessor**

****MOTION (5)**

Mr. Kelley moved to open the budget review for Item 127 – Board of Assessment Appeals.
Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Ms. Johnson said that it is anticipated that there will be less appeals as the reval process is over.

Ms. Picarazzi asked the basis for the stipend for the Board members.

Ms. Bekech said that they have always received a stipend for their services and that it is per Statute that it was approved that they would get an hourly rate. It is a nominal rate and the majority of that line – 412 is used for the Recording Secretary.

Mr. Hart asked how many appeals they had.

Ms. Bekech said that they only had 18 appeals this year and that they had 75 last year from the reval.

****MOTION (6)**

Mr. Kelley moved to close the budget review for Item 127 – Board of Assessment Appeals.
Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Building Department (104) – Joseph Smith, Chief Building Official**

****MOTION (7)**

Mr. Kelley moved to open the budget review for Item 104 – Building Department.
Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.
Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart noted that due to more permits coming in and more projects that they had requested more money for a part time person to help with inspections. The increase is approximately \$8500. There is also a capital request for \$15,000 for web based software.

Ms. Picarazzi said that line 212 was increased to \$14,818 and the difference is \$8,582 from last year. Mr. Smith said that he had requested a certain increase and Mr. Formica had reduced it and the \$14,818 includes the reduced increase.

Mr. Hart asked Mr. Smith if he was looking for help for extra work that he is expecting. Mr. Smith said that he anticipated that there is a lot of work in the wings and if even 10% comes through, he would need the help. He said that he can farm out the plan review as they re-wrote the ordinances previously to allow for that – so the large projects plan review could be sent out to an outside company. The person who was filling in at those times that he needed him will be available again in May and he would like to use him again. He said that the other big item is the capital request for software. He explained that this would also need to be supported in successive years. There is some nice software out now in this range and it would cost approximately \$8,000 - \$13,000 per year afterwards to support it. It would not require additional server storage for the Town as it is done with cloud storage. He said that he imagines that it would take five years before they would see the savings from it and everyone is totally comfortable working with it. Customers would be able to complete applications for permits on-line. He said that he has been looking at systems that would be expandable for other departments within the Town to also use.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about line 211 – his salary which is reflecting a 5% increase as opposed to the 2.5%. Mr. Smith said that was correct.

Ms. Picarazzi asked how that works.

Ms. Johnson said that the 2.5% steps appear every other year on the date of hire and that once they reach the top step, they would just get the COLA.

****MOTION (8)**

Mr. Carpenteri moved to close the budget review for Item 104 – Building Department.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Human Resources (106) – Renee Fecteau, Human Resources Manager**

****MOTION (9)**

Mr. Harney moved to open the budget review for Item 106 – Human Resources.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart asked if this was going to be a new category.

Ms. Johnson said yes, the hours for this person have been moved to the Finance Department - #118.

****MOTION (10)**

Mr. Harney moved to close the budget review for Item 106 – Human Resources.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Commission on Aging (418) – Cathy Wilson, Senior Services Director**

****MOTION (11)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to open the budget review for Item 418 – Commission on Aging.

Mr. Kelley seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart noted that there are salary increases.

Ms. Johnson said that the increase in this department is primarily due to wages.

Mr. Kelley asked about line 311 – Admin/Clerical salaries noting that it is up by \$28,000+ and asked that they split it out next time so that there are separate figures for the bus drivers and the administrative people.

Ms. Johnson explained that line 311 references a group of employees in a particular bargaining unit.

Ms. Picarazzi said that line 311 increased by 7% and asked if that was correct as it seems rather steep.

Ms. Johnson said that it represents two years' salaries due to the timing on signing the contract.

****MOTION (12)**

Mr. Kelley moved to close the budget review for Item 418 – Commission on Aging.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **First Selectman (101) – Paul Formica, First Selectman**

Mr. Hart asked that they move this item to the Special Meeting of March 18, 2013 so that Mr. Formica could present it.

◆ **Finance Department (118) – Anna Johnson, Finance Director**

****MOTION (13)**

Mr. Harney moved to open the budget review for Item 118 – Finance Department.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Ms. Johnson explained that as Mr. Formica had previously explained that positions have been reorganized with the passing of Mr. Giannattasio. The Field Services position is a separate position now and they felt it best to move the HR functions under the Finance Department. Also, the part-time staff accountant who did reconciliations for them has resigned and they are combining this function with Ms. Fecteau's position as she had originally worked in the Finance Office.

Ms. Picarazzi asked for further explanation as the numbers do not seem to work.

Ms. Johnson said that the sum of the two part time functions is 28 hours with no benefits.

****MOTION (14)**

Mr. Bengtson moved to close the budget review for Item 118 – Finance Department.

Mr. Harney seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Health & Welfare (419) – VNA, presented by Ms. Johnson**

****MOTION (15)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to open the budget review for Item 419 – Health & Welfare.

Mr. Harney seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart noted that this is showing a reduction of \$1000.

Ms. Johnson explained that she has spoken with the VNA President who presents to them what she expects to use and this is the amount that they requested.

****MOTION (16)**

Mr. Kelley moved to close the budget review for Item 419 – Health & Welfare.

Ms. Picarazzi seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ **Police (216) – Sgt. Bill Blanchette, Resident State Trooper**

****MOTION (17)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to open the budget review for Item 216 – Police.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Mr. Hart asked Sgt. Blanchette why there is such an increase.

Sgt. Blanchette said that most of it is salary and explained that they had hired two (2) officers in mid year and that they are now at full strength with 22 officers.

Mr. Kelley said that line 514 – Overtime had increased by \$10,000 and that he thought that they should expect it to level off now with the 22 officers.

Sgt. Blanchette said that he is not sure about that. This year was a particularly difficult one with many people out and it is hard to predict what will happen. He said that he is looking for the FEMA monies to make it through this year. He added that with the opening of the new beach that they will have additional responsibility and they will have to increase the foot patrol and coverage for parade duty, etc.

Mr. Hart asked about line 512 – PT Constables noting that they still have one but have used little money this year so far.

Sgt. Blanchette said that the constable had a foot injury and has not worked one shift this year.

Mr. Hart asked if they would have to keep the training up for this.

Sgt. Blanchette said yes, the training is every three years and right now he is up to date.

Mr. Hart asked about the \$5000 for boat fuel and if it would be used for the Jet Ski also.

Sgt. Blanchette said that they do expect to use it and noted that Mr. Holyfield has brought fuel down to the boat in order for them to save in fuel costs.

Mr. Carpenteri asked if Waterford shares this cost.

Sgt. Blanchette said yes.

****MOTION (18)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to close the budget review for Item 216 – Police.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ Debt Service Interest & Principal (522 & 523) – Anna Johnson, Finance Director

****MOTION (19)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to open the budget review for Items 522 & 523 – Debt Service Interest & Principal.

Mr. Kelley seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Ms. Johnson said that they will note that this has gone down and that it is fairly self-explanatory. She said that they try to keep a flat line over time and that they review new capital items with that in mind.

Mr. Hart asked if there was anymore re-financing that they could do.

Ms. Johnson said that they have done pretty much as much as can be done at this point in time.

Mr. Harney asked what type of re-finance rates they were looking at now.

Ms. Johnson said that it varies based on the number of years.

****MOTION (20)**

Mr. Kelley moved to close the budget review for Items 522 & 523 – Debt Service Interest & Principal.

Mr. Carpenteri seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

◆ Long Range Capital Plan 724 – Paul Formica, First Selectman

Mr. Hart asked that they move Capital - #724 and the Long Range Capital Plan to the Special Meeting of March 18, 2013 so that Mr. Formica could present it.

E. Public Discussion

Mr. Hart called for any comments from the Public.

There were none.

F. Board Comments

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

G. Adjournment

****MOTION (21)**

Ms. Picarazzi moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 7:33 PM.

Mr. Harney seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary