

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL BUDGET REVIEW MEETING OF FEBRUARY 9, 2010
MINUTES

PRESENT: Paul Formica, Mark Nickerson, John Birmingham, Rose Ann Hardy, Rob Wilson.

EXCUSED: John Hogan.

ALSO PRESENT: Finance Director Anna Johnson.

Mr. Formica called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m. and led the Pledge.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

Mr. Formica stated that Parks and Recreation Director Dave Putnam was hoping to utilize a special revenue fund and if approved, this would show a decrease in his projected budget since the revenues would be taken out and shown in a separate fund. He added that the rest of the budget was straight forward with increases for salary.

Director Dave Putnam noted that there was no budget line included for the move to the new building. He reviewed his draft EL Parks and Recreation Commission Special Revenue Fund (SRF) Policy – 2010 (identified as Attachment A.). He said that all the program expenses and revenue would be taken and placed in a special fund which will offer opportunities to expand their programs. He said the draft is set up to send 75% of the surplus to the SRF and 25% to the Town of East Lyme's General Fund. He noted that for the last two years, program brochures have been sent to every home in East Lyme and this accounts for their enrollment increases. He said that the SRF would be broken down into 6 sub categories which would include:

- Youth Activities
- Adult Activities
- Special Events
- Playground Program
- Donations
- Celebrate East Lyme.

Mr. Formica stated that Celebrate East Lyme has always been a separately funded account. The cash came in from vendors and was kept in a separate bank savings account. Checks had to be drafted in order to pay for services and this was done by the First Selectman's Office and that this was not the best procedure. He added that after discussion, Parks and Recreation had agreed to take over the lead for this event.

Mr. Nickerson said that the Special Revenue Fund made a lot of sense and it offers incentives to grow and become more profitable. He added that it definitely would offer the Commission more flexibility and that Parks and Recreation overseeing Celebrate East Lyme made perfect sense. He stressed his support.

Mr. Wilson noted he was Ex-Officio to this Commission and has seen the program activity grow and they should be able to reap the benefits of this growth. He supported this change and he liked the donation potential and added it made sense to place Celebrate East Lyme under the Parks and Recreation umbrella. He said that there are many towns that are way ahead of us and already operate like this and noted he saw no down side to this.

Ms. Hardy noted that in the past, revenue was to offset programs.

Mr. Putnam responded that this will continue to be the policy.

Ms. Hardy said she was trying to understand how this is different from the normal procedure.

Mr. Putnam responded that this policy would enable them to utilize revenue to reinvest in programs and improvements.

Ms. Hardy inquired if the Town Attorney had reviewed this since it was a departure of our policy where all monies went into the General Fund. She noted the Commission on Aging which has a Parahus Account and the Harbor Management Commission has a separate fund however, they must come before the Board of Selectmen for approval when they wanted to spend any of this funding. She added that if this was approved, it would make the Parks and Recreation Commission very independent compared to the rest of the town commissions. She also voiced opposition to Celebrate East Lyme becoming a town function since when formed, it was a donations based event and not a responsibility of the town.

Mr. Putnam noted that the Board of Selectmen had received two budgets for Parks and Recreation; one with the special revenue fund and one without.

Mr. Birmingham inquired if the other 19 towns that had a special revenue fund were set up the same way?

Mr. Putnam responded they all have a special revenue fund and some of the towns have all the money going in and some have a percentage going in.

Mr. Birmingham said that with this new account, it would be clearer as to where the money comes from and where it was going. He suggested monthly reporting and agreed it would offer an incentive to add new programs and agreed it was a good idea.

Mr. Putnam pointed out that on his revenue sheet; the beach groomer machine was making money.

Ms. Hardy noted the increase in the part time seasonal labor line.

Mr. Putnam responded that he had 75 seasonal employees and many were returning.

Ms. Hardy inquired how much money was realized from renting the fields.

Mr. Putnam said he would email the number to Mr. Formica.

Mr. Nickerson inquired about line item 311 – maintenance payroll.

Mr. Putnam said he was now at full staff levels, where in the past he had a maintenance man out on sick leave and an established position that was not filled.

Ms. Hardy inquired about the expense number for maintaining McCooks Park.

Mr. Putnam said that the beach passes were set at the same level as last year; \$30 for resident, \$10 for Senior and \$80 for non residents.

Mr. Formica thanked Mr. Putnam for his presentation and for all his good work and noted the Board would take a 2 minute recess at 6:13 p.m.

Mr. Formica called the meeting back in session at 6:15 p.m.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Sergeant Blanchette commented that he had done what he could to keep costs to a minimum in his 2010/2011 departmental budget submittal. He added that 85% of the salary budget was by contractual agreement and that the increase of \$100,000 + was for the police officers and part time officers contractual increases.

Mr. Formica commented that there had been a rash of burglaries in East Lyme and other shoreline towns and he had suggested that an officer be moved over from regular rotation to become a “second detective”.

Sgt. Blanchette said that the radio maintenance increase was due to the fact that the repairs would be done on their own and not by the Town’s IT person. He said that the training supply increase was due to ammunition and related supplies costing more.

Mr. Formica suggested that the Finance Director double check the increase in police officer salaries to make sure it is correct.

Sgt. Blanchette noted that 80% of the officers received a step increase this year in addition to the COLA.

Ms. Hardy inquired if any grants were available for equipment?

Sgt. Blanchette responded that he was constantly looking for grant opportunities and had just received a JAG grant of \$9100 which would purchase digital cameras, crime scene kits for each car, and fingerprint and drug kits. He added that each year he budgets for the purchase of 4 vests so that every five years, all vests are replaced. He said that new

computers in the cars cost \$4500 and a refurbished one costs \$700. He said that the in house computers are outdated but manageable.

Mr. Formica said that if we continue to new vehicle lease program, there will be two new cars every year totally outfitted with new computers therefore, in five years, all will have new computers. He said that the Town's IT person also had the in-house computers at the police department listed for replacement as needed.

Ms. Hardy inquired if this budget fully meets all the safety needs of the Police Department?

Sgt Blanchette responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Wilson requested a count of how many times the police boat was out this past summer.

Mr. Nickerson asked if there was any revenue realized from the parades, etc.

Sgt. Blanchette said that the marathons generate revenue and their services are paid for by outside vendors. He said we still pay for the Light Parade, and the Holiday Stroll and that he has utilized the Mutual Aid Compact with surrounding towns and received numerous officers for Celebrate East Lyme and other events.

Mr. Formica thanked Sgt. Blanchette for his efforts and noted that he has been great for the department.

The Board discussed the departments they would like to review and the dates that they were available. The consensus of the Board was as follows:

- February 11 from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Niantic Fire Dept., Flanders Fire Department and the Selectmen's budget.

- February 25 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. – Public Works, Building Maintenance, Engineering, IT.

- March 1 at 5:00 p.m. Emergency Management / Public Safety.

- March 3 at 6:00 p.m. Board of Education.

- Budget deliberations and pass budgets on March 3rd.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Nickerson moved to adjourn the special meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Birmingham. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted, Darlene C. Stevens, Recording Secretary

