

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
BUDGET REVIEWS – FY 2018-2019  
Wednesday, MARCH 28th, 2018**

**Members In Attendance:** William Weber, Chairman  
Lisa Picarazzi, Vice-Chairperson  
Camille Alberti  
John Birmingham  
Jason Pazzaglia  
Anne Santoro

**Also In Attendance:** Mark Nickerson, First Selectman  
Anna Johnson, Finance Director  
Gary Goeschel, Town Planner, Wetland Agent  
Matthew Walker, Zoning Commission Chairman  
William Mulholland, Zoning Official  
Steve Wargo, Niantic Fire Chief  
William Rix, Flanders Fire Chief  
Chris Taylor, Fire Marshal

**Absent:** No One

**A. Call Special Meeting to Order**

Chairman Weber called this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance to order at 6:31 PM.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge was observed.

**C. Delegations**

Mr. Weber called for Delegations noting that only agenda items could be discussed during delegations. There were no delegations.

**D. New Business**

**a. Budget Reviews – FY 2018 - 2019**

♦ **Planning Department & Commission (117) – Gary Goeschel, Town Planner & Wetland Agent**

Mr. Nickerson said that this is a pretty straight forward budget; and that it had been kept flat. He noted that Mr. Goeschel is present this evening.

Mr. Goeschel explained what this aspect of his position entails and said that he had kept the budget flat.

Mr. Weber asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if they would be undertaking an update of the POCD this year.

Mr. Goeschel said that they would start as they received a \$50,000 CIRCA Grant and have sub-committees that are being set up to begin the information gathering. The POCD has to be done by 2020 in order to continue to be eligible to apply for and receive grant funding. He noted that he along with others in the Public Works department have been able to secure a few million dollars in grant funding over the years.

Ms. Alberti said that it is good to being in grant money and asked what the \$7,250 in revenue represents.

Mr. Goeschel said that it is primarily from the subdivision application fees and fees for GIS maps and copies.

Ms. Picarazzi asked Mr. Nickerson about the longevity on the dept. head position, why as it is not a union position.

Mr. Nickerson said that it is in an agreement and that he is working towards changes to it.

FILED

APR 5 2018 AT 9:50 AM/PM

*Camille Alberti*

EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Ms. Picarazzi said that the 2.5% step is also in there and they are not union.  
Mr. Weber recalled that they had this conversation about money as it was the issue when money was transferred a few weeks ago to cover the salary increases.

◆ **Inland Wetlands Agency (132) – Gary Goeschel, Wetland Agent; Gary Upton, IWA Chairman**  
Mr. Nickerson said that this is a Commission that can be very busy or very slow –it varies.

Ms. Santoro asked about the jump in the Recording Secretary line item.  
Mr. Goeschel explained that they had to pay overtime after the first half hour with a person who already worked FT for the Town and it busted the budget with all of the meetings that they were having recently so they had to look for someone who does not work for the Town so they do not have to pay extra. This is also in anticipation of an application that was received and would have to be reviewed by the IWA.

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

Mr. Nickerson explained that Zoning is also the Aquifer Protection Agency for the Town and that the Zoning Official is also the Blight Officer.

Mr. Walker, Chairman of the Zoning Commission thanked them for having them this evening. He said that he wanted to read some information to them this evening to give them a better idea of what they do. (Submitted & attached)

(Note: 6:56 PM – Mr. Pazzaglia arrived and was seated)

William Mulholland, Zoning Official said that the budget was flat. He noted that they may see another 120 apartment at Gateway in the near future which would boost the revenue line item. They remain busy with applications, information and zoning and blight enforcement.

Mr. Weber noted that he was a member of the Zoning Commission some 19 years ago and said that they have always been busy whenever he asks.

Mr. Pazzaglia asked about the fee schedule for the various items and if they should be increased.  
Mr. Mulholland said that they have fee schedules that are covered by ordinance and that he reviews them regularly. In a recent review he said that he found that our fees appear to still be in line with those of the neighboring Towns.

Ms. Santoro asked where they are with blight enforcement and if it has been successful as it has been available as a tool for a year now.

Mr. Mulholland said that he utilizes a two-pronged approach with regard to blight issues. He couples the zoning regulations with the blight to seek compliance. Many times that is all that is needed to gain compliance. He said that there are a few cases that have gone to and/or are now in court. The fees can be a lien against the property which assures us that the Town will be reimbursed.

Ms. Santoro asked if these people would also owe taxes.

Mr. Mulholland said that some may, some may not. He noted that the process that we follow with the blight enforcement is the process that was set up by the State. It is a cumbersome process and requires some innovative thought on how to achieve compliance. He thanked Ms. Zmitruk for tracking the cases and letters and helping to keep the process intact.

Ms. Alberti first thanked him for helping to clean up the Town and then asked about the reimbursement to the Town for legal expenses.

Mr. Mulholland explained that he first tries to obtain compliance with a series of letters citing the issue and what is expected while noting that the blight ordinance also can be used for compliance. Should it get to that stage, as a few cases have, the Town has a \$5000 lien against one property which means that we will be reimbursed for legal expenses. We may have to wait until the property changes hands; however we will be paid back.

Mr. Weber said that the Zoning Department was the only one that did not have a narrative in the back of the budget sheet. He thanked them for the handout with all of the information that was read into the record. He also noted that he had said that the blight enforcement would be time consuming however he felt that it would be worth it in the end.

◆ **Ledge Light Health District (108) – Mark Nickerson for LLHD**

Mr. Nickerson said that LLHD is now in 22 Towns in the county and is so much more involved than what people would think. The districts per capita rate is \$7.37 – the same as it was in the previous year. The reason for our fee going down is due to a population decrease as reported by the DPH. It was 19,343 and is now 18,886. The decrease is due to the reduction in the prison population.

Mr. Nickerson said that Mr. Mansfield is at another meeting this evening and could to attend.

Ms. Santoro asked if they are serving our specific needs as they come up.

Mr. Nickerson said yes, noting that Mr. Mansfield and his team have gone after grant monies for specific issues such as for Lyme disease for this area and opiod abuse in the region.

◆ **Smith Harris House Commission (134) – presented by Mr. Nickerson, First Selectman**

Mr. Nickerson noted that Mr. Seifel and Mr. Lakowsky are in their Commission meeting this evening. He said that there is a very small increase for PT Clerical here for the Tour Guides. They are also seeking to be able to serve beer and wine at this property in the barn for weddings. This would increase the potential for more revenue to be brought in.

Mr. Birmingham asked about the liability issue.

Mr. Nickerson said that with a certified bartender and a liability policy for each event it could be controlled. It has to be done right.

◆ **Niantic Fire Department (217) – Steve Wargo, Niantic Fire Chief**

Mr. Nickerson said that Chief Wargo is a volunteer to this department and the FT Chief in New London.

Chief Wargo noted that the salary increase is due to the underfunding last year. However; there is a reduction in longevity due to the recent retirement of Mr. Pringle. He said that the two buildings that he has are 60 and 44 years old.

Ms. Santoro said that the overtime line item shows a decrease and asked if it would be sufficient or if they would be back looking for additional funds.

Mr. Wargo said that he feels that the \$67,000 is adequate for now.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if he has read the recommendations from the Fire Study and if they are looking into implementing any of them.

Mr. Wargo said that all of them have read the study and found that there are about four or five that they are chipping away at that they could use.

Ms. Picarazzi said that one is for bulk purchases and economies of scale.

Mr. Wargo said that they are looking at it and they could possibly do that with the fire hose.

Mr. Nickerson said that they do the OSA; ladder tests and other testing together.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she hoped that since it has been out for a year that they would be looking into it to implement some items for the upcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Nickerson said that if they were to hire a Fire chief for all the departments that they would be looking at growing the budget as these are dedicated and unpaid Chiefs.

Mr. Birmingham said that there are four FT, but how many PT people.

Mr. Wargo said that there are nine PT.

Mr. Birmingham asked how much overtime would be for the FT and PT people.

Mr. Wargo said that the majority is for the four FT's as the PT's make less and would have to work over 40 hours before getting overtime.

Mr. Pazzaglia asked if the vehicle maintenance is done outside.

Mr. Wargo said yes.

◆ **Flanders Fire Department (218) – William Rix, Flanders Fire Chief**

Flanders Chief Rix noted that the uniforms are for the PT people as what they have are beyond old.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the overtime.

Mr. Nickerson explained that they work 45 hours/week so they have a built-in five hours of overtime each week.

Ms. Picarazzi asked why they do that especially when we are up against so much trying to make a budget work.

Mr. Rix said that if you were to take it out that you would have to pay them anyways as it is in their salaries.

Ms. Picarazzi said that she is sorry but she feels that they have to look at this as it is a lot of money and she would like it to be done in a better way.

Mr. Nickerson said that what they would lose is prime hours coverage.

Ms. Picarazzi said that it is a chunk of money that has to be looked at. She then asked Mr. Rix if he had reviewed the fire study and what his thoughts on it were.

Mr. Rix said that he read the entire fire study and found that some of the things mentioned they have already been doing. They are already buying hose, etc at reduced rates. The only place left to save would be with the engine purchases.

Ms. Alberti said that in looking at the shared items that she thinks that some items are less and some more percentage wise. She asked if he felt that it was disproportionate what they were paying since they have three FT people rather than the four.

Mr. Rix said that is what it is.

Ms. Alberti said that when she read the fire study that it seemed that they are going outside of Town to provide some services, more so than what they receive back.

Chris Taylor, Fire Marshal said that there is a lot more than the study portrays that is done together. He said that he thinks that when they keep referring to the study that it may not be what East Lyme should be doing. The chiefs that they have now are doing a great job. He said that he assists the firehouses and they all do a great job working together. He asked that they realize that all things are a work in progress.

Mr. Weber said that he has already said that they have to study the information separately with a committee.

Ms. Alberti said that the study suggested that the number of calls may have been inflated. She asked if high level activity has increased or decreased in Town. Her interest is in that they need to know if it was a prudent decision to spend the money on the study or not.

Mr. Taylor said that the calls have increases. He added that the study is a good baseline.

Mr. Birmingham said that he sees where Ms. Picarazzi is coming from on the overtime – he asked if others have this issue.

Mr. Rix said that he could not answer that as he does not know.

Mr. Nickerson said that it was done so they would have regulars there to answer the phones during the shift changeovers.

Mr. Rix said that they move the PT's up when a FT person retires and that they have been fortunate so far to have qualified in-Town people.

◆ **Emergency Management (224) – Chris Taylor, Fire Marshal**

Mr. Nickerson said that this is a big budget. Mr. Taylor is the new Fire marshal and they did not hire anyone to replace him when he moved up. He noted that the \$87,423 has \$10,000 in it for Mr. Finkelstein.

Mr. Taylor said that year to date that they have done 200 inspections from January first of this year. They also do lodging permits. He said that he always has to have the position covered so if he goes on vacation there has to be coverage. The miscellaneous supplies line item is up due to them now having to pay for the Nutmeg connection which was previously paid for by the Engineering Department. It has now been transferred to them.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if the PT FM's was anticipated due to the inspections for the schools project which starts as soon as school lets out.

Mr. Taylor said that they are already looking over things there and have been integral to the process all along. It will continue to be very busy for them with this project.

Mr. Birmingham asked approximately how many 911 calls per week they get.

Mr. Taylor said that they could be doing some 60-70 calls per day.

Mr. Nickerson said that is now under Chief Finkelstein.

Ms. Santoro asked about the revenue figure and the background on it.  
Mr. Taylor explained that the revenue comes from blasting and lodging permits.  
(Note: a brief break was taken here)

◆ **General Govt. & Misc. Benefits (114) – presented by Mark Nickerson & Anna Johnson**

Ms. Johnson explained that this is where the fixed costs are. She noted that the workers compensation is with CIRMA. The most difficult piece is with the overtime. They did an RFP for Health insurance and after it came back the recommendation was to stay with Aetna.

Mr. Nickerson said that there is talk at CCM about an overall plan but the problem with trying to do that is all the varieties of coverage that exists within all the different bargaining units.

Ms. Johnson said that the Town has 120 units which include Town, Water & Sewer and Library employees; the BOE has 323 people. They are looking at a gross cost of about \$9.4M then they have the employee share. She then explained the retirement liability. They have figured out that with an aging population that they have an unfunded liability of \$873,816 – so budgeting for it has helped with this as well as people agreeing to take the money over time – say perhaps 50% then another 50% or two years more at 25% each year.

Ms. Santoro asked if the audit reports made any recommendations on this.

Ms. Johnson said that they have not had issues with it so far so as it has been okay and they are planning for it now, this has helped them out. She continued that with legal services that she figures it over a ten year average and in doing so was able to make a small reduction. With regard to unemployment compensation she said that they have had some claims but have been fortunate in not having to pay. However; the liability insurance has a small increase in it.

Ms. Picarazzi said that the pension line item is hurtful and that if more people are retiring it could be an issue.  
Ms. Johnson said that when they looked at it – that it is done by actuarial tables.

Ms. Picarazzi said that this is where the negatives on the salaries come into play – if they take some of the steps away it would make a very big difference.

Ms. Alberti asked what the unfunded pension liability percentage was last year.

Ms. Johnson said that we are funded at around 80% and considered to be well funded.

Mr. Weber noted that \$400 seems small for eviction and storage.

Mr. Nickerson said that it is something that every Town has to do.

◆ **Contingency (120) – presented by Mark Nickerson & Anna Johnson**

Mr. Nickerson explained that there is the regular and the payroll contingencies. The regular operating contingency is for unexpected needs throughout the year. The payroll contingency is for the three bargaining units that they are working with and they expect that it will be okay.

Ms. Santoro asked about the undesignated fund balance.

Ms. Johnson said that it is a bit over 7% around \$5.1M.

◆ **Capital (724) – Mark Nickerson & Anna Johnson**

Ms. Johnson explained the spreadsheet and how it breaks down.

Mr. Weber asked how they define capital.

Mr. Nickerson said that it is for 'big ticket items'.

Ms. Alberti asked if they use the safe harbor rule - \$5,000 and up items.

Ms. Johnson said yes, it has to be over \$5,000.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if they could realize some gains if they look at the long rang plan that Mr. Bragaw is working on.

Ms. Johnson said that the plan is just being developed and is around a year out. Next years plan is to use LoCIP money for items.

◆ **CNRE – presented by Mark Nickerson & Anna Johnson**

Ms. Johnson explained the sheet and how it works. She noted that she has had about \$8,400 come in to date for the police vehicles with another \$8,400 due in.

**E. Public Discussion**

Mr. Weber called for any comments from the Public.  
There were none.

**F. Board Comments**

Mr. Weber called for Board Comments.

Ms. Alberti said that she would like to have the item called Revenue added to the April 9, 2018 agenda.

**G. Adjournment**

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

Mr. Birmingham moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 9:25 PM.

Ms. Santoro seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,  
Recording Secretary

# Town of

P.O. Drawer 519  
Zoning Department



# East Lyme

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## **East Lyme Zoning Commission Annual Report July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017**

Charged by the Connecticut legislature to develop and administer the community's comprehensive zoning plan, the East Lyme Zoning Commission adopts, administers and enforces regulations, which are designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare.

Though a separate entity, the Zoning Department is considered an integral part of the commission to which it reports. The Zoning Department is responsible for the administration, interpretation and enforcement of the zoning regulations. The department acts in an advisory capacity to the Commission and to the general public, providing technical knowledge on a variety of zoning topics to both parties. The Zoning Department is available on a daily basis to answer general and technical land use questions. In addition, the department also receives, reviews and processes all commercial, industrial, multi-family and single-family residential development applications.

The Zoning Department, on behalf of the Commission, also functions as the Town's central development office. In this capacity the Zoning Department operates as the primary contact point for parties interested in commercial, industrial, affordable and multi-family development in the community, providing both information and guidance through the regulatory process. As in previous years, the department staff continues to work closely with developers to ensure a responsible approach to architectural and landscaping design. These efforts are evident in many of the new commercial buildings in our community. The new orthopedic offices and orthodontic/dental offices are the newest commercial additions, along with the new Dollar General. In addition, the zoning office is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Town's Flood Hazard and Coastal Management Regulations.

While extremely busy, the staff continues its efforts to enhance service to the public. During this reporting period the following activities occurred:

*Read into record by Chairman Walter BOT 3/28/18*

Permits review and approved by the Zoning Department

Single Family (New) Dwelling	38
Single Family Additions/Alterations	207
Commercial/Light Industrial Additions/alterations	34
Misc. Permits (pools, accessory bldgs, signs, other)	291
New Commercial	6
Multi-Family (new)	
Mechanicals	392

The total number of permits issued during this period was 497: A total estimated value was approximately \$29,542,538.46. In addition, the Zoning Office process 175+ zoning complaints during the year.

The Zoning Commission held numerous regularly scheduled and special meetings over the course of the reporting period.

The Commission reviewed the following applications and concerns during the monthly meetings:

Special Permits	18
Regulation Amendments	2
Zoning Changes	0
Affordable Housing Proposals	0
Coastal Area Site Plans	8
Site Plans	6
Regulation Waivers	4

Further, the Zoning Commission has been designated as East Lyme's Aquifer Protection Agency. Aquifer Protection is a state mandated program that is designed to protect major public water supply wells and gravel aquifers to ensure a plentiful supply of public drinking water for present and future generations. This program's responsibilities are shared by the State DEEP, the municipalities and the water companies.

Municipalities play the most critical role, we are responsible for appointing an Aquifer Protection Agency (the Zoning Commission), inventorying land uses within the Aquifer Protection Area, designated the Aquifer Protection Area Boundary and adopting and implementing local land use restrictions. The agency regulates land use activities within the Aquifer Protection Area by:

- Registering existing regulated activities
- Issuing Certificates for new regulated activities
- Overseeing regulated facilities

To date we monitor 28 businesses and regulate 11. All have been inspected and registered. Others were not registered because they did not meet regulatory thresholds or were/are regulated by DEEP.

The Aquifer Protection Agency meets bi-monthly and is staffed by Mr. Mulholland, our Zoning Official, who is certified by the State DEEP as an Aquifer Protection Agent. He is responsible

for overseeing the program and inspecting facilities. I also note that currently this is an unfunded Board with no budget.

In addition, I also note while not a function of the Zoning Commission or Aquifer Protection Agency, Mr. Mulholland also administers and enforces the Town's adopted Blight Prevention Program.

As Chairman of the commission, I express my appreciation to the Zoning Commission for its faithful service to the Town of East Lyme on this important and often controversial commission. I also extend my sincerest appreciation to our agent and Zoning Official, Mr. Mulholland. His Zoning and Planning expertise, professionalism and courtesy to those he serves, and his long service to East Lyme is a huge asset to our beloved town. Through the work he does along side of the Commission members, he is dramatically improving the ambience, character, style and pride of East Lyme. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the Administrative Assistant, Jennifer Lindo Dashnaw and Administrative Assistant Karen Zmitruk for their dedication and support.

Faithfully submitted,

Matthew Walker  
Chairman  
East Lyme Zoning Commission