

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2019
BUDGET REVIEW

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mark Nickerson, Kevin Seery, Rose Ann Hardy, Dan Cunningham, Marc Salerno and Paul Dagle
ALSO PRESENT: Anna Johnson, Mary Smith, John McCullough, Dave Putnam, Lisa Timothy, Cathy Wilson, Barbara Johnson Low and Gary Lakowski

Mr. Nickerson called the Special Meeting for the purpose of Budget Reviews to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Seery Moved to move the budgets for 139 Historic Properties and 134 Brookside Farm Museum to be heard after 103 Tax Collector.

Seconded by Mrs. Hardy. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Salerno arrived at 5:32 p.m. and Mr. Dagle arrived at 5:36 p.m.

#110 Registrars

Mary Smith spoke on behalf of this budget. She reported that the Town's machines are aging and will need to be replaced in the near future; the cost for a new/refurbished machine is \$7,000, and needs to be verified and approved by the Secretary of State. Ballots cost \$0.28 a piece to have printed, and they have to estimate how many to be printed for each individual election/referendum. The most recent referendum for the public safety complex cost approximately \$1,800. Mrs. Hardy inquired as to if we could participate as a test center, and Ms. Smith advised that we have in the past, and she will inquire as to our eligibility at the upcoming Registrars conference with the Secretary of the State. Mr. Nickerson inquired as to additional security costs incurred by needing a police presence at the polling site, and Ms. Smith stated that she will be working with Chief Finkelstein to work out how this should be handled.

#103 Tax Collector

John McCullough spoke on behalf of this budget. He reported that our town is the only town left that does not outsource their annual tax bills; however, they did outsource them last year to try it out but at a high cost. In order to save money, he stated that he has negotiated putting five additional hours into the Tax Collector Aide budget to bring that position up to 30 hours per week, and in turn keep the bills in house and send them manually.

#139 Historic Properties

Barbara Johnson Low spoke on behalf of this budget. She reported that the Samuel Smith Farmstead will need some significant work, including repairing a main beam in the home, which is estimated to be around \$3,000, \$500 more than what is in the budget for repairs. She stated that they do not currently charge an entrance fee for any of the events, but that it costs \$5 for a membership. They would like to be more proactive with finding grants that are available, but that they do not have someone in mind to take on that task. Mr. Nickerson stated that he will include this volunteer opportunity in the next newsletter of the East Lyme Volunteer Corps. Ms. Low stated that Line 216 is budgeted for their project to digitize information.

#134 Brookside Farm Museum

Gary Lakowski spoke on behalf on this budget. He reported that Line 412 shows a reduction because they are no longer paying for tour guides but using volunteers. He stated that they have a couple of events coming up, including the Bike & BBQ event. This year's cleanup day is scheduled for April 13th. He reported that after discussions with the State, they will be replacing the signs on Rt. 161, at no charge to the Town, so that they read Brookside Farm Museum.

#421 Parks and Recreation

Dave Putnam spoke on behalf of this budget. Mr. Putnam reported that they are halfway through the first year using the Beach Enterprise Fund; and he noted that April and May is when they receive all of their revenue, and July and

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Karen Miller
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

August is when all of their expenses incur. Mr. Nickerson noted that they are well on their way to the goal of becoming a self funded commission. Mr. Putnam stated that they will begin selling beach passes soon and that as a reminder the fees increases slightly this year for resident passes. Mr. Nickerson inquired as to how an increase in the minimum wage would affect this budget, and Mr. Putnam stated that because of the large number of part time summer employees, an increase in wages will significantly impact this budget. Mr. Putnam commended Jason Alves as well as his entire staff for consistently doing a tremendous job of even with one less full time Maintainer. He noted that this is why he is asking for increased part time labor to offset this reduction in full time employees. Mrs. Hardy inquired as to where the revenues from vendors go, and Mr. Putnam stated that Peretz Park revenues go to the general fund and Cini, McCook's and Hole in the Wall go into the Enterprise Fund.

#420 Library

Lisa Timothy spoke on behalf of this budget. She reported that the library has become a 21st century entity with the institution of streaming videos, e-books and e-magazines. They have also gotten rid of all vhs tapes; historical videos have been digitally uploaded. This has opened up some extra space for books. She reports that between state and town budget reductions, they have approximately \$88,000 less to work with, and that they have changed the hours and are now closed on Sundays in order to make up for this shortfall. The carpet needs to be replaced, and this expense is in the Capital Budget. The increase requested in this budget is to open back up on Sunday's, and to increase the book supply to make up for the state funds being cut in half. Mrs. Hardy inquired as to a specific age group that may be affected by the library being closed on Sundays; Ms. Timothy stated that it's more about economic status, and whether or not the resident has access to the internet, than it is about an age group. Mr. Nickerson stated that he supports this budget and hopes it passes as the library program has been hit hard over the past couple of years and needs support. Mr. Cunningham stated that he is very pleased with the collaboration of the library and historical society on the digitizing project. Mr. Dave Jacobs, Vice Chair of the Library Board of Trustees, spoke briefly and supported this budget. He invited the Board of Selectmen to tour the library and get some behind the scenes perspective; Mr. Nickerson agreed this is a great idea and will schedule a visit after budget season has passed.

#418 Commission on Aging

Cathy Wilson spoke on behalf of this budget. She stated that similar to the library, they are running out of space to sufficiently run all of their programs; 35% of which are paid instructors and 65% volunteers. This past year a full time employee left and was replaced with a 30 hour per week employee; they are asking to bring that position back up to full time at 37.5 hours. Line 215 shows a reduction due to switching from the shared RecTrac software with Parks & Recreation, to a senior center specific software. Line 240 has increased because inspections now include the lift on the vehicles. Mrs. Hardy inquired about the charges incurred for having classes at the Masonic Temple; and Ms. Wilson responded that currently those charges comes out of the Parks & Recreation budget. She reported that anywhere from 265 – 400 seniors require transportation in any given month; for transportation needs such as grocery shopping, appoints, rides to and from the senior center, to name a couple. Ms. Wilson stated that TCVVA had their budget cut so in turn our services have gone down, for instance we no longer have a representative on location to assist.

#118 Finance Department

Anna Johnson spoke on behalf of this budget. The only changes are in payroll; the long term HR Coordinator retired and was replaced by someone at a lower pay scale. Renee will continue to work eight hours per week to do bank reconciliations, which is depicted in line item 213.

MOTION (2)

Mr. Seery Moved to adjourn the March 6, 2019 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectman at 7:08 p.m.
Seconded by Mr. Dagle. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra Anderson
Recording Secretary