

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE  
SPECIAL MEETING FOR BUDGET REVIEWS  
APRIL 8, 2019**

**Present:** Bill Weber, Chair  
John T. Birmingham  
Lisa H. Picarazzi  
Anne R. Santoro  
Camille F. Alberti

**Absent:** Jason D. Pazzaglia

**Also, Present:** Mark Nickerson, First Selectman  
Anna Johnson, Finance Director  
Mike Schulz, resident  
Timothy Hagen, Chairman of the Board of Education  
Jeff Newton, Superintendent of Schools  
Marianne Stevens, Board of Education Finance Director  
Ryan Shrader, Board of Education member  
Amy Drowne, Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools  
Kim Davis, Director of Student Services  
Jaime Barr Shelburn, Board of Education member

FILED

APR 12 2019 AT 9:50 AM/PM  
*Karen Miller*  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

- A. **CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER.** Chairman Weber called the East Lyme Board of Finance Special Meeting for Budget Reviews to order at 6:30 p.m.
- B. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.
- C. **DELEGATIONS.** Mr. Schulz of Lovers Lane, East Lyme felt that residents are being overcharged when we are paying for the Master's Degree for administrators, and he felt they are over qualified for their positions. This would save the Town \$500,000 and he asked that consideration to eliminating it should be considered.
- He felt the \$750,000 for extra curricular activities is excessive. He asked the Board to consider a reduction to it.
- He felt there should be one-year contracts, because we cannot determine what will happen in two or three years. He suggested that raises be given on merit and that all step changes should be removed.
- D. **OLD BUSINESS.**
- a. Budget Deliberations. The Board reviewed the Town of East Lyme Proposed 2019/20 Capital Projects and Long-Range Capital Plan Department Requests.
- Mr. Nickerson reported the Public Works Director requested a hook truck. It was removed from the Public Works budget and placed in Capital Projects.
- He stated the Town will need money for reevaluation which is mandated by the state to begin in July 2020.
- He added some items will be funded by LoCIP, and we cannot spend it if it is not in our plan.
- He reported we upgrade our computers in Town every seventh or eighth year.
- We are continuing to improve our roads

Mr. Weber asked if these items will come back to this Board before they are bonded? He was informed every year after the budget is adopted there may be requests for special appropriations.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if there were other acquisition items? Ms. Johnson replied the total cost for these items are spread over five years.

Ms. Johnson reported we will appropriate money for LoCIP.

She stated the Commission on Aging applied for a grant to purchase a new vehicle in 2021.

Ms. Alberti asked how much will be set aside for reevaluation? Ms. Johnson replied \$282,000.

Ms. Alberti asked how do we determine the cost of CNRE to be \$357,000? Ms. Johnson replied the police are requesting two vehicles and we are budgeting \$170,000 for them. They are also requesting a detective vehicle. We will include these vehicles in the Acquisition Plan. No money is coming from the General Fund. Ms. Alberti asked what is the additional \$8,000 for? Ms. Johnson replied for the Police Department's share of the Waterford boat.

Ms. Alberti asked what is the \$81,000 for a vehicle in the Engineering Department? Ms. Johnson replied that is for a Ford Escape. Its for a partial payment of \$4,965. Ms. Alberti understood \$50,000 was for a vehicle for the Fire Chief. Ms. Johnson stated the other two vehicles are for Public Works.

Ms. Santoro referred to Building Maintenance of \$100,000. Ms. Johnson replied the Board of Selectmen felt \$100,000 was a place holder.

Mr. Weber felt LoCIP funds would impact our budget. Mr. Nickerson stated we will ask for LoCIP money from the state for some items.

Ms. Santoro asked if the server replacement was under the Police Department? Mr. Nickerson stated they will need a server.

Ms. Santoro noted we bonded Animal Control last year for \$150,000 and asked do we bond the \$150,000? Ms. Johnson stated we have.

Ms. Santoro noted in the Public Works Department there is a loader and shed for a cost of \$100,000. She stated it was \$60,000 last year. Mr. Nickerson replied we priced it. We need a new scale to weigh trucks. We have workers in the shed and it is not insulated. We need to upgrade it. We can use LoCIP funds.

Ms. Santoro referred to the Capital Plan funding sources. Ms. Johnson replied we are using this to show the total cost to purchase items.

Ms. Picarazzi referred to the Capital Improvement Plan and noted \$23,000 would be spread over five years. Mr. Nickerson stated the cost will be \$4,965 over five years.

Ms. Picarazzi referred to a Monster Lawn Mower for Parks and Recreation included in the \$95,000. Ms. Johnson stated we will have an annual payment of \$20,494. Ms. Picarazzi asked what is the additional \$51,412 for? Ms. Johnson replied for items purchased in prior years.

Mr. Nickerson stated we are hopeful you will approve the software package to develop what the budget will look like.

Ms. Picarazzi asked where the three vehicles requested will be used? Ms. Johnson replied \$350,000 is requested from the Public Works Department.

Ms. Picarazzi referred to \$100,000 from LoCIP and suggested that it be used for the Police Department.

Ms. Picarazzi asked how much will be bonded? She was informed \$5 million. Ms. Alberti asked how much of it can be reduced. Mr. Nickerson replied \$440,000 is listed for the Town's needs. One hundred thousand can be set aside for emergencies.

Mr. Birmingham stated in the past LoCIP money has come in. Mr. Nickerson reported it will come in after the state budget is passed. Ms. Johnson stated we began putting LoCIP in the CNRE Fund. Every year we have increased the balance. Mr. Weber asked if we have \$450,000 in the LoCIP Fund who decides what projects will be funded? Mr. Nickerson replied he and Public Works decides what projects are most needed. Ms. Picarazzi suggested that \$100,000 go back to the taxpayer.

Ms. Picarazzi asked of the \$550,000 to be bonded is any of this money for a fire truck? She was informed the Police Department is requesting a new patrol vehicle, a detective vehicle and a spare vehicle. The spare vehicle they have is being replaced. A patrol vehicle will be purchased. The canine vehicle, which is the oldest vehicle will become a spare. We are replacing two patrol vehicles and a detective vehicle. This will be paid for by fees. Ms. Picarazzi asked why isn't this funded in the General Fund? Ms. Johnson stated the CNRE can be used to pay for new vehicles.

Mr. Weber noted the Expedition is to be replaced in 2020. Ms. Johnson informed him the money has been set aside for the Expedition. It will be funded through CNRE. It has been previously approved.

Ms. Johnson had discussion with Mr. Bragaw regarding the hook truck. We will be leaving the acquisition payment plan in his department's budget.

Mr. Nickerson reported we have recently received a second police car that was approved last year. Ms. Picarazzi noted under the Police Department we have \$3 million. Mr. Nickerson stated our emergency vehicles are for the Police Chief and Fire Marshall's Office. Ms. Picarazzi stated the Flanders Fire Department has a 2006 vehicle with many miles on it. She asked if \$35,000 is sufficient? She was informed Mr. Barone felt they can wait another year for a new fire engine. Mr. Nickerson stated they will need two fire engines next year.

The Board took a five-minute break.

Chairman Weber called the meeting back to order for deliberations on the Board of Education proposed budget.

Ms. Santoro asked for an update on staffing. Mr. Newton distributed the attached information on certified staff proposed for fiscal year 2020.

Ms. Alberti asked for an explanation on staffing for Niantic Center School? Mr. Newton replied it increased because of Salem students. Three are for after school programs and the parents are charged for these programs. Ms. Stevens added it depends on who signs up for the after school program. A teacher ratio is needed. Ms. Alberti felt if they are not paid through the budget, it should not be included.

Mr. Newton felt security was needed at both ends of the school.

Ms. Alberti noted that there is a 9.7 reduction in staffing. Mr. Newton replied enrollment changes weekly.

Ms. Alberti stated administration is not included in this list. Mr. Newton replied it has not changed.

Ms. Picarazzi felt we need a trend in order for us to understand staffing. Mr. Newton replied our staffing for next year is being reduced. Ms. Stevens added there are four children from Salem that need a one to one aide and two security personnel. Mr. Newton stated we did focus on certified and

support staff which can change. We bill Salem. Ms. Stevens added this has no impact on our budget. Salem reimburses us for our expenses.

Ms. Alberti asked who are the support staff? Ms. Stevens replied occupational therapists and paraprofessionals.

Ms. Santoro asked if the \$50,000 includes insurance coverage? Ms. Stevens replied it does not. The insurance cost will be \$10,000. We will need to negotiate what the employees' share of the premium will be. Ms. Picarazzi asked is an incentive offered to opt out of insurance? Mr. Newton asked that the Board of Finance continue to join us in negotiations. It's a three-year contract.

Ms. Santoro asked what percentage of 57 students are mandated by the state? Ms. Drowne replied more than one half is for special education. We have contracts for a full-time occupational therapist along with specialty programs. This year we are using contracted money to meet those needs. They are paid hourly. The state requires us to provide these services. Ms. Drowne added the team decides what level of services are needed depending on the disability.

Ms. Santoro asked if the state is proposing a change to its grants? Mr. Newton stated we anticipate a reduction in books. We estimate the budget for books to be \$375,000.

Ms. Santoro noted transportation and special education cost are increasing. Ms. Stevens replied this is a varying number and is contingent on the student population. Some may move in and some may move out. This is merely an estimate.

Ms. Picarazzi felt the projected balance is decreasing for this year. Ms. Stevens replied we are using money from items not covered under school construction.

Ms. Picarazzi asked is \$142,000 revenue? Ms. Stevens replied this is from the Special Revenue Fund and is program oriented for an after and before care program. This program was eliminated because of a low participation. Ms. Stevens added it was funded by the programs.

Mr. Newton reported we may have a change to the student population with redistricting.

Ms. Santoro asked that the Board of Education consider raising the rates for other programs. Mr. Newton replied we are considering raising the rates.

Ms. Alberti stated since it's a self-contained program expenses are not in the budget. Ms. Stevens reported the enrichment program dollars can only be used for the students participating.

Ms. Alberti asked about \$50,000 for an acquisition of a vehicle. Dr. Hagen replied the maintenance truck is not repairable. Mr. Bragaw may pass one on to the Board of Education.

Ms. Alberti asked about \$50,000 for sidewalk repairs at the Middle School. Mr. Newton informed her the Middle School and High School sidewalks have deteriorated. Dr. Hagen stated we are working with Mr. Bragaw on this matter.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about enrollment estimates. Mr. Newton stated our enrollment has increased by 18 students since October. Ms. Picarazzi asked if this is an accurate number of students? She was informed there are no tools to determine how accurate they are. Mr. Newton stated the administration is staffing for what they see not for what may occur in the future.

Ms. Santoro observed the Board of Education has a Health Enhancement Program. She noted last year in the fall additional funds was needed because of health insurance costs. If individuals do not complete various tests within the timeframe outlined in the State Plan individuals will have to pay a

monthly penalty until they fulfill the requirements of the Plan. We will continue providing incentives for waiving insurance.

Ms. Picarazzi asked about the line item for ground supplies. Ms. Stevens replied we moved ground supplies and preventive maintenance to contracting services and the two items decreased by \$15,000.

Ms. Picarazzi asked why Math tutoring showed a lesser amount than Athletics. Mr. Newton informed her we value a full rounded experience for the child.

Mr. Birmingham asked which sport has the largest expense? Ms. Stevens replied baseball. He asked who pays for cleaning the uniforms. He was informed the parents do.

Mr. Weber stated last year there was an increase in the budget for a high-quality security staff. This year you desire to add additional staff. Mr. Newton replied with visitors coming into the building it was felt additional staff was needed.

Ms. Santoro asked why do you need to hire an additional administrator in the building? Mr. Newton stated the job responsibility will vary. She was informed the community members are trying to get into our buildings. A student may be having an issue.

Mr. Weber asked why is there a need for additional technology? He was informed we are behind other districts in providing students and teachers with adequate technology in the classroom. Thirteen teachers are trying to schedule the available computers. Ms. Santoro asked does it cover WIFI? She was informed we will have additional WIFI. Some projects this year had to be put on hold. Ms. Davis felt we need accessibility for phones. Mr. Birmingham asked what are these devices used for? Ms. Davis stated we are in the planning stage. Mr. Birmingham asked do some have their own devices? Mr. Newton stated none are assigned except for special education students. Mr. Birmingham asked if parents were asked to pay for them? Educators do not want youngsters to have devices with them. We are working with the pros and cons of other districts. Ms. Paparazzi asked what defines the Blue-Ribbon school? Mr. Newton stated testing. Its an award. Ms. Davis added you need to be in the top 40%. East Lyme was awarded it in 2017. Mr. Newton added the state recommends the school to be awarded. Ms. Davis reported we had a very high graduation rate. It was based on achievement. My job is that every child is growing. Mr. Weber felt East Lyme is a high performing school. Ms. Picarazzi questioned the staffing level. Ms. Stevens informed the Board this includes the before and after school programs. This staffing is for support staff and will increase at Niantic Center School. Lillie B. Elementary School has pre-school. Niantic Center has before and after school programs.

Ms. Picarazzi asked what is the per pupil cost? She was informed \$1,604. The youngsters that attend the Magnet School is expected to reduce the per pupil cost. Dr. Hagen reported we pay for them to attend. Ms. Stevens added this is based on the actual cost given by the state. Ms. Picarazzi asked is there no savings when a youngster attends another school? Ms. Stevens replied the per pupil cost is not reduced. Mr. Weber noted staff will be reduced. Ms. Picarazzi asked how many youngsters attend. She was informed 25. Ms. Alberti noted those youngsters are not included in the population. Dr. Hagen replied they are not, but they are East Lyme youngsters.

Ms. Picarazzi reported a comparison of five towns was done on the grade level and staffing. All youngsters from pre-kindergarten through eighth grades were totaled as well as the total cost and she felt the staff in East Lyme could be reduced. Dr. Hagen stated we are now supporting special education students in house.

#### E. NEW BUSINESS

East Lyme Board of Finance Special Meeting for Budget Reviews April 8, 2019

- a. Budget Deliberations. Ms. Johnson distributed Town of East Lyme Proposed 2019/20 Capital Projects Report and Long-Range Capital Plan She informed the Board reevaluation will go out to bid in 2020. We should have the results of the bid by this time next year. The CNRE on the spreadsheet is \$218,925. It includes the Waterford boat.

When the \$19,000 of the \$160,400 is removed from the CIP the \$160,400 will be reduced to \$141,000,

The Commission on Aging needs a new vehicle A grant has been applied for it. The library needs new carpeting. The carpeting is 30 years old. Ms. Santoro replied three quotes have been received and one vendor broke it into sections. Ms. Alberti stated she was in favor of replacing the entire carpeting.

**MOTION (1): Ms. Picarazzi moved to remove \$19,000 from Police Service in the Capital Plan. Seconded by Ms. Alberti. (5-0) Unanimous.**

**F. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

There was no public discussion.

**G. BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no additional comments from the Board.

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (2): Mr. Birmingham moved to adjourn the April 8, 2019 Special Meeting for Budget Review At 10:45 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Alberti. (5-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Geris, Pro-Tem