

EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 23, 2023
MINUTES

PRESENT: Denise Hall, John Birmingham, Peter DeRosa, Richard Steel, Paul Maxfield and Lauren McNamara

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Kevin Seery, Finance Director Kevin Gervais, Public Works Director Joe Bragaw, Town Engineer Alex Klose, Senior Center Director Cathy Wilson, Building Official Dave Garside and Library Director Lisa Timothy

Ms. Hall called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Delegations

There were none.

IV. New Business

a) EV Charging Stations

MOTION (1)

Mr. Maxfield MOVED to approve a Special Appropriation in the amount of \$15,000 to account #32-30-400-700-719, transferred from account #01-50-522-620-600. Of this \$15,000, \$4,972.50 will be paid to ESC upon acceptance of a contract between the Town of East Lyme, executed by the First Selectman Kevin Seery and ESC. The remainder of the funds, \$10,027.50, will be used for site construction items not covered in ESC's proposal, mostly concrete and paving work for the parking areas.

NOTE: This requires a Town Meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Birmingham. Motion passed 6-0.

b) Budget Reviews

i. Building Department - #104

Dave Garside, Building Official, was present to speak on this budget. He reported that Building/Planning/Zoning are in the process of reviewing fees, and anticipate that once collecting, that could bring approximately \$500,000 in revenue.

ii. Building Maintenance - #113

iii. Public Works - #317

iv. Engineering - #105

Joe Bragaw, Public Works Director, was present to speak on these three budgets, which can be reviewed on attached Exhibit #1.

v. Library - #420

Lisa Timothy, Library Director, was present to speak on this budget.

- This year's budget has a slight increase, but in the past previous years they have been able to reduce this budget.
- They eliminated one full-time position and made that into two part-time positions.

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
EAST LYME, CT
2023 MAR 27 A 8:43
Cassidy M. Medina
TOWN CLERK

- She reported that the library is starting to fill up and feel more like the pre-covid days.
- She will look into collaborating more with the schools.

vi. Commission on Aging - #418

Cathy Wilson, Senior Center Director, was present to speak on this budget.

- She was joined by Commission members John Whritner, Chairman, and Mike Bekech, Vice Chairman.
- Ms. Wilson will be retiring on March 31st after 28 years of service to the Town. Thank you, Cathy, for all you have done for the seniors in our community.
- She stated that she appreciates that the Town has always supported her and the Senior Center.
- Kristen Caramanica will be taking over as Senior Center Director; Ms. Caramanica was the very first Program Director back in 2015. Welcome back Kristen.
- Requests for transportation have increased significantly.
- Still waiting to receive the new bus which we purchased; in the meantime there are three busses, and they expect to keep the oldest, fourth bus after the new one arrives so that there are more options and a backup.
- One driver will be retiring, so they are considering replacing that full-time position with two part-time positions so that there will be three part-time drivers for more flexibility.

vii. Capital Projects

Finance Director Kevin Gervais and Public Works Director Joe Bragaw presented on these capital projects.

V. Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

VI. Board Comments

There were no comments.

VII. Adjourn

MOTION (2)

Mr. Steel MOVED to adjourn the March 23, 2023, special budget meeting of the East Lyme Board of Finance at 8:45 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Maxfield. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Sandra Anderson

Sandra Anderson
Recording Secretary

DEPT 317 - HIGHWAY

1. Line 100-211 & 311, the employees are only receiving 2.75% GWI increases next FY. The reason for the larger % increase is that last years Adopted and Amended budgets don't reflect any increases as these amounts were included in salary contingency
2. Line 100-314- We have been trending upward with regular OT for covering double collections and on the sanitation side, more help needed at the light parade, EL Day and other events that PW is asked to cover. **THIS LINE WAS CUT \$2K BY BOS**
3. Line 100-315 – Although the storm budget is way down this year, it has been trending higher in past years so with higher wage rates I was trying to cover guesstimated future storm coverage
4. Lines 316/317 – longevity/uniform allowance – the new union contract had higher longevity and uniform allowance payments so we have to cover this amounts
5. Line 200-224 – We increased the road reconstruction line by \$12,500 to keep up with higher costs
6. Line 200-239 – There are lots of trees that are dead that need to be taken down. On top of this, we use these funds to proactively trim the canopies on town roads so that they don't become an issue. **THIS LINE WAS CUT \$10K BY BOS**
7. Line 210-295 – The tip fee we pay to our regional trash authority is going up from \$59.25/ton this year to \$61.25/ton next year or 3.4% to keep up with cost escalations in disposal costs. This is a subsidized rate from SCRRRA as many towns in CT around paying around \$110/ton.
8. Line 210-296- Bulky Waste tip fees and the transportation costs to haul the BW up to Willimantic have gone up 15% and 35% respectively over the last two years. We keep raising our rates that we charge customers at the TS station to try to keep up with these price increases so that is one of the reasons why the landfill deposits revenue line has increased so much over the last few years.
9. Line 220-221 – Due to a number of reasons, the costs to maintain our town fleet has risen a lot. Some of those reasons are the high costs of parts. Materials and fluids, more vehicles in the fleet and larger repairs to some of our vehicles. In FY 21-22, this budget came in at \$278k while the budget was \$225k. This current yr the budget was \$231,750 and we will probably be coming in at \$270k again. This year were are asking for \$267k. In the years we were over budget in this line, we had to make

transfers from our other operational lines to cover the costs. **THIS LINE WAS CUT \$7K BY BOS**

10. Line 300-440 – Storm Materials- We typically use approx. 1,800 tons of treated salt per year. We haven't had to use much this year and the salt dome is now full, but the costs of salt have risen significantly over the last 3 winters (up 49% this year from FY 20-21). With the projected cost another 10% next year, this line had to go way up to cover salt for next season.
11. Line 310-221 – fuels – unfortunately the number you are looking at \$234,400 is incorrect. After I submitted this budget and as I was working on the water and sewer budget, I found an error in the fuel spreadsheet as was using the same fuel prices this year as next year. The number should be \$275,800, not \$234,400 or \$41,400 more. I purchase all the fuel for the Town and spend a lot of time trying to get the best costs for the Town.
12. Line 400-210- Streetlights – This is my most fulfilling budget line item. Back 7 + years ago, I came up with the idea to buying our town streetlights from Eversource and converting them to LED. I proposed a plan that we take a 7-year loan and pay it back while keeping essentially the same budget line cost as we had back in 2015. This FY we made our final payment on that loan so next year we will obtain all those savings going forward as the budget line is dropping \$144,560 to only \$67,700. This is a huge help in a budget year that will be very difficult.
13. Line 500-224 – TAR – It appears that the State grant for TAR will be going down this year from \$337,458 to \$314,849. This line is used for road and pavement improvements as part of our Pavement Mgt plan.
14. In the revenues lines, the one for Commerical tipping shows a \$25k increase as we will be charging the commercial vendors more per ton as our costs go up.
15. The recycling revenue line – 01-08-800-807 is down \$16k as the scrap market pricing has been going down from its high over the last year.

DEPT 105 – ENGINEERING

The only two line items of note that I see are as follows'

1. The Town Engineer's line 100-211 - jumped up from last year. Our Town Engineer has been with the Town since August of 2021 and has done a phenomenal job so we raised his salary up higher than other GWI's in this current year so next year it is in line with the rest of the 2.75% increases.

2. We needed to raise the storm water mgt line – 200-029 – to keep up with all the required stormwater testing for our DEEP permits

DEPT 113 – BUILDING MAINTENANCE

1. Line 100-311 – I am not asking for any additional employees, this is another case of this FY Amended budget not reflecting the salary increases that are in salary contingency.
2. Line 100-314 – There is a proposed increase of \$19,000 to cover weekend custodians at the ELCC. In the past, library and P&R staff unlocked and locked the building and had to handle cleaning incidents if they were open on weekends. During COVID, cleaning and the security of the building became more important so we started having a custodian cover an 8 hr shift on Sat and 4 hr shift on Sundays when P&R activities and the libraries were open. The cost of Saturdays was picked up by P&R special activity fund and Sundays was covered by the library budget. These departments have asked that the Town cover these costs in the coming year.
3. Line 200-216 – Service Contracts – we have seen an increase to the service contract costs that needs to be covered
4. Line 200-222 - Building Maint – We have been seeing a lot more costs that you can't specifically plan for and has put a lot of pressure on this budget line item.
5. Line 200-295 reflects the 10% increase to the fire protection line item as requested by the W&S Comm
6. Line 300-317 – Custodial Supplies – I raised this up \$5k a year ago with the start of the new Public Safety Building. Now that we have stocked up on supplies, I can lower our annual budget request.
7. Line 400-213 – the only other line item that is showing a big increase is the heating line due to large projected increases in propane and #2 fuel oil costs. In the current year, we budgeted \$100k back in December of 2021 and the energy markets took off in the spring of 2022. We are somewhat lucky this winter that it has been very mild but I already gave the First Selectman and the Dir of Finance a heads up that this line item will probably be over this current year, so I was trying to budget the proper amount for next FY.

