

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2010
MINUTES

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

EXCUSED: John Hogan, John Birmingham.

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

PUBLIC SAFETY / FIRE MARSHAL:

Fire Marshal Dick Morris reviewed his budget noting the large increase request for a change in the staffing levels of 911. He said that the dispatch center has become overworked and it needs two more fulltime dispatchers to handle the increased volume. He said that as it is now with one person on the desk, it's a big problem and a safety issue. He also noted that this would be the first year of a five year payment for radio maintenance.

Mr. Formica noted that he supported bringing the increase request to the Board of Selectmen and agreed the 911 Center is getting busier and asked the Board, where do we want to go from here.

Mr. Wilson agreed with the need saying that the Board has to make a decision on direction. He said that the Police Department also needs to get on board with this and share some of the responsibility. He suggested a sergeant controlling the dispatch of police officers.

Mr. Formica said that this operation is ripe for regionalization however; getting the mechanics in place to do this is difficult.

Ms. Hardy inquired about the possibility of the receptionist at the Police Department answering a dispatch line during the day. She said that this was the third time that Mr. Morris had brought this request to the Board.

Mr. Morris commented that this would not work. He agreed with the possibility of moving a police officer to dispatch.

Mr. Formica noted that the mileage rate went from .55 to .50 this year.

Mr. Wilson noted that the supplies line doubled.

Niantic Fire Chief Pringle said that if we want the dispatch center to operate the way that it has in the past, we need to hire additional dispatchers. He added that it was physically impossible with just one person sitting there.

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Lombardo and Chair Tim Hagen were present and reviewed his power point presentation (identified as attachment A.)

Dr. Lombardo said that they had made a conscious reduction in the budget share of special education and was presenting a budget with a 1.97% increase over last year or \$773,200. He said that the increases were mainly in property services such as maintenance needs, health insurance benefits, and instructional improvements for special education. He stressed that this budget does not have a lot of flexibility but, sometimes we have to sit back and take a deep breath and say – this is what the times require.

Ms. Hardy noted that the student supplies line was cut last year and this year there was an early budget freeze.

Dr. Lombardo responded that he did freeze the supplies line since this was one budget line he could freeze. He said he is concerned, but in tough economic times they were trying to keep as close to a 0 budget as possible.

Ms. Hardy inquired if the tuition rate for out of district students had been set yet?

Dr. Lombardo said that the rate was increased 5% this year, but was not set for next year yet. He said that the Salem rate is set by a formula.

Mr. Nickerson said that he found this budget inspiring and that the 1.97% increase was a realistic figure.

Dr. Lombardo thanked Mr. Nickerson but added that this is the leanest budget he has had in his 24 years as a Superintendent. He said when times are tough; you have to do what is necessary.

Mr. Formica inquired if the Board was relying on stimulus funding to support the new special education coordinator?

Dr. Lombardo said that the Special Ed Coordinator is critical toward the long term program improvements and cost effective programming. He added that there will be no reduction of services for the kids; we will just be doing more in town. He said that since the position would not be hired until later this year it would be fully funded the remainder of the year and next with the stimulus funding.

Mr. Formica thanked Dr. Lombardo for doing great things in a very short time.

Ms. Hardy said that this appears to be a minimalist budget with no funding for innovations.

East Lyme Board of Selectmen Special Meeting 3/1/10 minutes

Dr. Lombardo responded that this budget will result in improvements and enhancements in special education and we will have better trained staff. He said he was optimistic with the direction they were heading in.

Mr. Formica noted the Board would take a few minutes recess at 7:09 p.m.

Mr. Formica reconvened the meeting at 7:16 p.m. and noted that the Board had agreed to close this meeting and hold a special meeting on March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the capital budget and services to the community.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Wilson moved to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 7:17 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Nickerson. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene C. Stevens, Recording Secretary