

**Litchfield Board of Finance  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
April 7, 2014**

**Call to Order:** Vice Chairman David W. Wilson called the meeting to order in the LIS Art Room at 7:05pm with Ed Gadomski, Brenda Barnes, Mitchell Fishman, Anne Dranginis and Sky Post (Alt.) present.

Absent: David Geiger, Ed Weik (Alt.)

Also present were Rose Bouchard, Leo Paul, Jack Healy, Jeffrey Zullo, Frank Simone, and Wayne Shuhi

**Appointment of Alternates:**

Vice Chairman David W. Wilson appointed Sky Post as a full member in place of David Geiger.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** Anne Dranginis moved to accept the 3-10-14 regular meeting minutes. Brenda Barnes seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** Anne Dranginis moved to table approval of the 3-17-14 special meeting minutes until the next meeting since the Board members had not received them for review. Mitchell Fishman seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

Jeffrey Zullo said he was a dissenting voter on the BOS budget since he thinks there is room for reductions. He noted that Connecticut ranks first in the US for per capita debt and Litchfield ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in the state. He also believes the BOE budget increase is too high and reductions could be made in various areas such as consolidating bus routes, and the capital budget could also be reduced.

**First Selectman's Update:**

**Motion:** Mitchell Fishman moved that the BOS Update and/or Public Works Capital Budget Review agenda item be moved to follow the Finance Director's reports. Anne Dranginis seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Finance Director's Monthly Report:**

Rose Bouchard distributed the YTD Revenue Report as of March 2014, the YTD Expenditure Report as of March 2014, and a Financial Overview as of March 31, 2014.

On the Revenue Report, Rose noted that current year property taxes for FY14 are nearly on pace with last year at 98.9%, and this year there was \$530,000 more to collect.

On the Expense Report, Rose noted that Department 2401 (Emergency Management) is awaiting a state reimbursement that will reduce some of their expenses and Department 3103 (Highways) is over budget due to heavy usage of salt on winter roads. The town is now using TAR (Town Aid Roads) funds for salt.

In summary, as of March 31, the town has collected 97.0% of revenue and has spent 71.2% of the BOS budget 75% through the fiscal year and the town is also 76.0% committed. There is a budget freeze in effect for the BOS budget as of February 18, 2014.

Rose distributed the 2013-2014 Budget Summary Preliminary (Post BAA Appeals) which shows two scenarios: With the "Circuit Breaker" deducted and with the "Circuit Breaker" only at the end. She also distributed the Town of Litchfield Proposed 2014-2015 Town Budget with line items and showing a 25.3 mil rate for the 2014-2015 proposed town of Litchfield budget, or an 11.9% increases for property taxes. Rose answered several questions from Board members concerning the \$3.4Mil Debt Service/Capital Outlay and other calculations. She said this budget would be published in the newspaper prior to the April 23, 2014 public hearing.

Vice Chairman David W. Wilson said the BOF will not have a special meeting the night of the public hearing and he will poll BOF members to schedule the next special meeting.

### **Public Works Capital Budget Review:**

Jack Healy answered several questions from BOF members on the Department of Public Works items in the Town of Litchfield Capital Budget for 2014-2015. He explained Vehicles & Equipment line item of \$380,000 included replacing a landscape truck with a flatbed and sweeper for catch basins among others. The \$150,000 for Bridges is for the Clark Road bridge wing walls, the only bridge work not fully funded. The \$200,000 to rebuild the salt sheds will result in keeping a larger supply of salt on-site in a more durable and secure structure.

The largest line item for major road projects includes roads that have deteriorated due to years of deferred maintenance and the grind and paving will be done by road contractors. He said Public Works outsources certain services when that is more cost efficient.

Leo Paul said he had no major items to discuss for the BOS update. When asked where cuts might be made in the BOS budget if the townspeople did not approve it, he said the largest portion of the budget was Public Works and after several years of austere budgets, it was necessary to increase this year's Public Works budget. He said it would be more costly in the future if major repair projects and equipment replacement is not done now.

### **Board of Education Budget Review and Discussion:**

Vice Chairman Wilson said the BOF believes the BOE budget is too high and probably would not pass approval at the public hearing on April 23. Wayne Shuhi responded that the Superintendent, financial director and Board members were not invited in advance to tonight's meeting, they were not prepared to discuss the budget. Anne Dranginis expressed hope that the BOE would have sufficient explanation for their budget at the public hearing and John Bongiorno said a White Paper has been prepared for that purpose and will be on the BOE website.

Anne Dranginis said another concern is that the BOE has in the past returned to the fund balance budgeted dollars that were unused. This situation can raise the mil rate unnecessarily. Vice Chairman Wilson recommended that the BOE consider where budget cuts can be made if that is the will of the taxpayers expressed at the public hearing.

Wayne Shuhi said any further questions on the BOE budget could be sent to Frank Simone.

**Consider and Act upon a Resolution:**

After discussion on adopting the resolution to appropriate \$3,095,000 for the Litchfield Capital Improvement Plan 2014-2015 and authorize issuance of \$3,020,000 bonds, Mitchell Fishman asked if the BOF could postpone this action as long as it was done prior to the May 7, 2014 town budget meeting.

**Motion:** Mitchell Fishman moved to table consideration and action on this Resolution until the next BOF special meeting. Sky Post seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**New Business:**

a. **Financial Transfers:**

**Motion:** Mitchell Fishman moved to transfer \$10,000 from the Contingency into the Paramedic Intercept Account (4201-54123) on behalf of the Fire Marshal. This line item is presently over budget by \$380.00. Following this transfer, the Contingency balance will be \$60,400. Sky Post seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

b. **Correspondence:** There was no correspondence.

c. **Payment of Bills:** There were no bills for payment.

**Old Business and Committee Reports:**

**Motion:** Ed Gadomski moved to dispense with these two agenda items and Mitchell Fishman seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Anne Dranginis moved to adjourn at 8:57pm and Mitchell Fishman seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Jaacks  
Recording Secretary