

SPECIAL Budget MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2009  
EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES

PRESENT: Paul Formica, Rose Ann Hardy, Pam Rowe, Robert Kleinhans.

ALSO: Finance Director Anna Johnson.

Mr. Formica called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and led the Pledge.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 105 – Town Engineer.

Town Engineer Bill Scheer was present to review his budget noting the only increase was the salary line.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Hogan entered the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

Ms. Hardy inquired about the position vacated by Keith Hayden.

Mr. Scheer commented that the position had been advertised at an entry level, lower pay scale position and he stressed the need for the hiring of this position.

Mr. Wilson entered the meeting at 5:14 p.m.

Mr. Formica thanked Mr. Scheer for the tremendous work he does and added that the quality of work from this office is superb.

MOTION (2)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 105 Engineer with a bottom line of \$301,551.

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

MOTION (3)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 109 Information Technology.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Scheer noted that he oversees this department, which includes one full time employee, Carmen Ames. He stated that Ms. Ames monitors 90 computers in the Town Hall, Parks and Recreation, Commission on Aging, Police, O& M and the Town Garage. He said that this is another lean budget with the majority of funding being salary. He stated that the new copiers have shown postage decreases in some departments and added that as ink is used up, desktop copiers are being removed. He said that there are 3 items in the Capital Budget for IT; \$20,000 for new computers for Town Departments, \$12,000 for email server and software, and \$5000 for a Microsoft Office upgrade. He stressed that the money for the server is the most important.

Mr. Wilson commented that last year, it was suggested that a CNRE be formed for technical upgrades, adding that the Town should be buying a number of computers every year just like police cars. He inquired if the CIP request gives this department enough?

Mr. Scheer responded in the affirmative.

MOTION (4)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 109 Information Technology with a bottom line of \$76,538.

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

MOTION (5)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 104 Building.

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

Building Official Joe Smith was present and noted that his budget was down adding that the Assistant

Building Official had resigned and he was utilizing the services of an as needed Building Official for inspections approximately 3 days per week. He added that there was a reduction in the Administrative Assistant line since now there was one full time person and since the other had resigned, that position was hired for 20 hours a week.

Ms. Rowe inquired about the permit refund line.

Mr. Smith responded that he needs a number in the budget so that when he needs to refund a permit fee, he has a budget line to use.

Mr. Kleinhans inquired if there was a State requirement to refund permits fees?

Mr. Smith said he did not believe so.

Mr. Wilson inquired about the part time building inspector and inquired how much he was paid.

Mr. Smith responded \$24.98 per hour, approximately 3 days per week for the year.

Mr. Formica commented that revenues are down and added that the Board had recently increased the permit fees to be in line with the market rate. He asked if this was sufficient.

Mr. Smith responded that fees are supposed to cover the operation of the department and he needs to take in more than he spends, but he believes the fees are at a good place at this time.

#### MOTION (6)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 104 Building with a bottom line of \$169,956.

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

#### MOTION (7)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 116 Zoning Commission.

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

Chair Mark Nickerson was present and commented that the State fee level could be decreased an additional \$2000.

Ms. Hardy noted that the recording secretary line was reduced.

Mr. Nickerson replied that due to the economy, the Commission anticipates fewer applications.

#### MOTION (8)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to reduce Tab 116 Zoning Commission Section 200 Services – Contracted / Operating, line 293 State Fees by \$2000.

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

#### MOTION (9)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 116 Zoning Commission with a bottom line of \$77,988.

Seconded by Ms. Hardy. Motion passed 6-0.

#### MOTION (10)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 130 Zoning Board of Appeals.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Formica noted that this was a very minimal budget.

#### MOTION (11)

Mr. Wilson moved to close Tab 130 Zoning Board of Appeals with a bottom line of \$1000.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

#### MOTION (12)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 117 Planning Department.

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

Mr. Formica noted that the Conservation Officer's salary was put in Tab 132 Inland Wetlands.

Town Planner Gary Goeschel noted that UCONN is providing GIS data and the funding in line 239 would be used to help integrate their data with ours. He added that he had reduced the request for GIS implementation by \$1000.

Mr. Formica commented that the Conservation Officer had resigned and Mr. Goeschel had been hired as Planner for four days a week. He said that the Conservation Officer's salary was in Tab 132, \$11,250 and Mr. Goeschel will serve in this capacity and will now work a 5-day week.

Mr. Goeschel commented that at this time, there was no need to fill the Land Use Coordinator position due to the economy. He added that if it picks up, perhaps he would add this. He also stated that he has been appointed as Fair Housing Officer.

Mr. Formica stated that if this position were needed in the future, he would support the hiring.

Ms. Hardy commented that there was no funding for the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Mr. Goeschel responded that the report is due on December 31, 2009 and that the Planning Commission budget line 129 had funding for it.

Mr. Formica said that the Plan of Conservation and Development Committee would be holding two information sessions on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Nett Hall and on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the High School Commons.

#### MOTION (13)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 117 Planning Department with a bottom line of \$61,750.

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

#### MOTION (14)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 132 Inland Wetlands.

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

Mr. Wilson noted the increase in mileage and inquired why so much?

Mr. Goeschel replied that perhaps the previous Conservation Officer utilized his own vehicle a good deal.

Mr. Formica noted they would review the transportation line (246).

Ms. Hardy stated that she had serious concerns about the reduction of the Conservation Officer position. She said that it had taken several years to make this position full time and she was distressed that we had now reduced it. She added that the protection of the wetlands should be a high priority and it should not be relegated to a lesser position.

Mr. Formica said that the previous Conservation Officer had a full time position in the Engineering Department and he was supposed to start one hour earlier and stay one hour later which would be 10 hours per week for this task. He added that there does not seem to be the level of need presently and going down from 10 hours to 8 hours made sense. He added that he would make the commitment to make this position more hours if we see the need.

Ms. Hardy stated that this position goes beyond issuing permits and we need someone out in the field every day.

Mr. Formica noted that we have had only one subdivision application in the last 18 months.

Mr. Kleinhans stated that we also have a lot of Commission members who are extremely vigilant of the wetlands and he did not believe that we needed a wetlands cop right now.

#### MOTION (15)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 132 Inland Wetlands with a bottom line of \$26,820.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

#### MOTION (16)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 138 Conservation of Natural Resources.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Formica explained that this was a new budget and previously another department had paid the recording secretary for this commission. He added that have created a small budget for recording secretarial fees and for the creation of some brochures.

Ms. Hardy commented that since this is a new commission, many of the members have not received any training and the budget line for this was low. She suggested having some money in the contingency fund if training was needed.

MOTION (17)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 138 Conservation of Natural Resources with a bottom line of \$2000.

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

MOTION (18)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 129 Planning Commission.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Goeschel noted that this was a modest budget.

MOTION (19)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 129 Planning Commission with a bottom line of \$3650.

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

MOTION (20)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 108 Ledge Light Health District.

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

Deputy Director Steve Mansfield and Chair of the Board of Directors Kent Sistare were present. Offering a brief history, Mr. Mansfield noted that towns could do one of three things: have a part time health department, a full time health district with a full time sanitarian or have a regional approach which is what many municipalities have. He added a Board of Directors governs the health district and each member municipality gets representation on the board. He said that the present budget is the most modest increase that the district has asked for in the last 15 years. He stressed that they are doing everything they can to keep costs down.

Mr. Formica clarified that the budget is based on a per capita rate multiplied by the number of residents. He added that he had been one of the protractors when this idea was posed but Ledge Light has done a great job of winning over the dissenters in our town.

Mr. Mansfield noted that the cost is \$7.60 per capita and the prison populations are included. He added this is no different than other towns that have universities or the Coast Guard Academy in their assessment.

MOTION (21)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 108 Ledge Light Health District with a bottom line of \$ 142,026.

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

MOTION (22)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 118 Finance Department.

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

Mr. Hogan inquired if the Town does the payroll electronically?

Ms. Johnson replied that we do not.

Mr. Kleinhans noted that she should look into it since the Town could realize a tremendous savings on the consolidation of automatic time cards.

Ms. Johnson noted that we would need to have a better server in place first.

MOTION (23)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 118 with a bottom line of \$208,113.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

MOTION (23)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to open Tab 131 Economic Development Commission.

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

Mr. Formica noted that line 236 helps fund Celebrate East Lyme and the Annual Light Parade adding that this is a small budget.

Ms. Hardy noted that in years past, they had discussed town bulletin boards, which could take up the need for signs and added that illegal signs are multiplying.

Mr. Formica stated that he is looking into the cost of digital signs, which would help in this area.

MOTION (24)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to close Tab 131 Economic Development Commission with a bottom line of \$6200.

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

Ms. Hardy noted she would not be present tomorrow evening for the Parks and Recreation budget review and she would like the free beach passes for Town employees brought up. She added a lot of our Town employees are not residents and the Selectmen had voted against doing this. She asked to find out how many people applied and the amount of revenues that were lost. She said that if the amount were substantial, this offer should be reconsidered.

Mr. Formica stated that he had met with the Health Insurance Consultants Inc., and the projected 7% increase to the budget has been reduced to 0% with a savings to the Town of \$100,000.

MOTION (25)

Mr. Kleinhans moved to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:56 p.m.

Seconded by Ms. Rowe. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene C. Stevens, Recording Secretary