

**Litchfield Board of Finance
Special Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2017**

Call to Order: Chairman David Wilson called the meeting to order in the LIS Art Room at 7:00p.m. with Ed Gadomski, Anne Dranginis, Matt Terzian, and Sky Post (Alt.) present.

Late: Helen Bunnell arrived at 7:04p.m.

Absent: Rose Blondin (Alt.)

Also present: Sherri Turner, David Fiorillo, and Frank Simone

Chairman Wilson appointed Sky Post as a full member in the absence of Helen Bunnell at the start of the meeting.

Review Potential Changes and Modifications to the Board of Education 2017/2018 Budget Proposal

Board of Education member Frank Simone distributed a breakdown of the current BOE budget of \$17,785,000 after a reduction to the budget of \$105,900. He noted this budget represents a 2.5% increase from the previous year's budget, and if the BOE budget is much lower, school programs will be impacted. Anne Dranginis asked if the BOE has applied for grants from Seherr-Thoss Foundation to update the study on the cost of education per pupil and regionalization, noting there are not enough students to justify the current school system. Frank Simone said the BOE is ready to move forward with this, but is waiting for the BOS to make a decision.

Chairman Wilson said the history of the BOE budgets shows a perception that they are padded, in preparation for making cuts requested by the BOF. He noted that the BOF does not have the authority to intervene with the BOS decision about seeking a grant for this study. Matt Terzian said he would like to see two studies and Frank Simone replied the BOE could do all the studies possible. Chairman Wilson suggested the BOE go to Craig Miner and David T. Wilson to resolve the issue of Region 6 and Thomaston's reluctance to proceed with regionalization. Anne Dranginis said the common goal should be identified and Chairman Wilson said all three Boards should work together on this issue for the good of the Litchfield taxpayers. There will be a budget hearing where the total budget will be brought to the public for input.

Director of Business Operations David Fiorillo answered questions from BOF members about health insurance increases, which reflect a 9.5% increase. Superintendent Sherri Turner answered a question about the recent resignation of a school psychologist by saying the position will be filled. There was discussion about the need for five principals and other issues. Superintendent Turner noted that state requirements have changed and teacher evaluations now take considerably more time. Helen Bunnell said there is a public perception that there are too many administrators for the number of students.

There was discussion about the contract for custodial and exterior maintenance, which the school administration is taking over in May. Frank Simone noted that after May 7, there is no MOU in place. BOE member Wayne Shuhi said many BOE members agreed that the Town was better equipped to do the exterior maintenance since they owned the equipment, but that was not the case with the custodial service. Chairman Wilson said the BOF must make a transfer of funding for the maintenance from the

Town to the BOE. David Fiorillo said the BOE prefers the contract issue to be resolved through mediation.

Chairman Wilson said on April 10, the BOF must vote on what to submit to the newspaper for the total budget and April 14 is the newspaper deadline to publish the BOS & BOE budgets.

There was discussion about achieving a 2% increase in lieu of the 2.5% increase now being proposed. The Grand List and revenues are not appreciably rising. David Fiorillo asked if the approximate amount of \$95,000-100,000 in cuts required to achieve the 2% increase could be done by postponing the Town's capital items. Chairman Wilson said the reduction in capital items would not reduce the mil rate in tax bills for July 1st; only the operating budget reduction would accomplish that. The 2% number would equal approximately a \$346,800 reduction. Frank Simone said the BOE would have to meet on Wednesday to decide whether or not to make further budget cuts. He offered to go to the town hearing with the 2.5% increase and let the public have their say. There was discussion about using a more moderate reduction of 2.3% for the BOE budget.

Board of Finance Discussion on the Proposed Budget and Take any Action Deemed Necessary

Motion: Matt Terzian moved that the BOF recommend a 2.3% increase in the BOE budget for 2017-2018, which would result in approximately \$400,000 more than the 2016-17 budget total of \$17,340,000. Anne Dranginis seconded the motion.

There was discussion about this recommendation.

Motion: Anne Dranginis moved to call the question. Matt Terzian seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted in the following and Chairman Wilson declared the motion carried to move this to the budget hearing.

Sky Post	Aye
Anne Dranginis	Aye
Matt Terzian	Aye
David Wilson	Not Voting
Helen Bunnell	Not Voting
Ed Gadomski	Nay

Adjournment

Motion: Anne Dranginis moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35p.m. Sky Post seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

The next meeting will be a regular meeting on Monday, April 10, 2017 at 7:00p.m. in the LIS Art Room

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Jaacks
Recording Secretary