

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

March 10, 2010

Present:

Linda Noble Claudette Lussier Carl Brunetti Cheryl Ethier Greg Leonard

Sheila Chisholm Jeremiah O'Grady Hagop Jawharjian Robert Ericson

Absent:

Joe Renning

Call To Order

The meeting began at 7:45 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

The minutes of March 3, 2010 were distributed for review. Linda Noble noted a change which was corrected.

Greg Leonard made a motion, seconded by Carl Brunetti to approve the minutes of March 3, 2010 as amended.

Cheryl Ethier and Greg Leonard abstained. The motion passed.

The minutes of March 4, 2010 were not available. Greg Leonard made a motion to table the approval of the minutes until March 11, 2010.

Carl Brunetti seconded. The motion passed.

Correspondence

Town Moderator, Robert Ericson sent an email to Chairperson Noble

informing her of the resignation of member John Picozzi. The email stated that Mr. Picozzi will be submitting his letter to the Town Clerk effective upon receipt. Bob also notified Councilor John Flynn since the vacancy is in District 2.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Old Business

School Committee Budget Recommendation

Carl Brunetti discussed the savings that would be realized if all school personnel were to take a pay freeze:

Administrative staff ... \$ 53,534

Certified staff ... \$ 893,891 (approx. 12 FTE's)

Support staff ... \$ 180,400

Total savings ... \$1,127,826

Carl also discussed the fact that there were errors in the spreadsheets for benefits provided to us by the School Department.

Breakage number of \$200,000 appears to be slightly low. Carl suggested that, based on his calculations, a more accurate number would be \$241,971.

Retirees were not budgeted in the healthcare line.

Pension object code did not include Medicare costs.

The budget includes 26 positions that are either grant-funded or funded using stimulus dollars. This FTE projection is based on the current year.

It was also noted that the proposed school formula shows Lincoln as receiving approximately \$2M in additional state aid but the formula is not finalized.

Discussed at length was the mandate which requires that municipalities provide the maintenance of effort for school funding.

A suggestion was made to recommend the maintenance of effort number (\$40,146,732) as the recommended bottom-line for school operating budget. Greg Leonard suggested that although we can only recommend a bottom-line number, he felt strongly that we should continue our detailed analysis so that we can recommend specific areas for the School Committee's to consider as they adopt a final budget after the Financial Town Meeting. Chairperson Noble did ask members to consider whether or not they were comfortable with the maintenance of effort number provided that the school system is able to exist and sustain programs. No formal position was taken at this time.

Sub-Committee Reports

Personnel: Carl Brunetti

Carl gave his report earlier under School Committee Budget Recommendation.

Purchased Services: Jeremiah O'Grady

Jay reported that currently there are 33 students attending the various Charter Schools. The School Committee's budget is for 67 students. Cheryl asked whether or not there was an offset for these students in the district's budget. Chairperson Noble offered that Superintendent Fortunato had previously explained that there is no way to know exactly what the cost savings would be until the actual numbers are finalized and the school district is notified of the transfers.

Closing/Leasing of Fairlawn: Bob Ericson

Claudette is reviewing the Power Point handouts and comparing the data to the budget request to get a better understanding of the actual savings. The worksheets provided by the school department show a reduction to the budget of \$562,530 as a result of closing Fairlawn.

Transportation: Sheila Chisholm

Sheila is reviewing the terms of the transportation contract and the \$120,000 increase in the requested budget accounts for the overall contractual increase, as well as the addition of one more bus. One bus is equal to \$59,800.

Other

Chairperson Noble asked about the school surplus. It is still unclear exactly how the school department gets access to their surplus funds? We will ask the Finance Director, John Ward to explain this.

Hagop Jawharjian will research the maintenance of effort statute and the “non-recurring expense” definition.

Claudette Lussier pointed out that the school committee’s 5-year summary does not have an updated 2008-2009 audited column and also an updated 12/31/09 expense column.

New Business

Town Administrator’s 2010-2011 Budget Recommendation

The Town Administrator’s budget recommendation will be discussed at tomorrow’s meeting and the Budget Board will meet with the Town Administrator next Thursday, March 18, 2010 at 7:30PM.

Vice Chairperson, Greg Leonard will compile the list of questions which will be advanced to the Town Administrator before next Thursday night’s meeting.

Other

Cheryl Ethier will review the Audit Report and Management Letter for next Thursday’s meeting with the Town Administrator.

Bob Ericson wondered about the status of the GIS mapping project.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

Carl Brunetti made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jeremiah O'Grady. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudette J. Lussier