

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

March 10, 2011

Present:

Linda Noble Claudette Lussier Domenic Ricci Greg Leonard Joe Renning

Mike Babbitt Bob Turner Carl Brunetti Paul DiDomenico Peter Fucci

Absent:

Hagop Jawharjian

Call To Order

The meeting began at 7:35 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

The minutes of March 9th were distributed for review.

Bob Turner made a motion, seconded by Domenic Ricci, to accept the minutes.

The minutes were approved by a vote of 9-0 with Greg Leonard abstaining because he was not present on March 9th.

Correspondence

A reporter from the Valley Breeze wanted to know if they could be

copied on any correspondence between the schools and the Budget Board.

The Budget Board is waiting for an opinion from the Town Solicitor as to whether they would have to comply with such a request.

Questions about the school budget from the previous Budget Board meeting were sent to the School Department.

There was a memo received from the RI Department of Education regarding the Maintenance of Effort. Their opinion is that the 2009 number should be used.

Discussion ensued about the Maintenance of Effort and Surplus and how they should be used.

The Town Solicitor will be attending the Budget Board meeting next Thursday to discuss these items.

The Budget Board discussed the actions of the Town Council last year and whether in order to set a precedent the items that they amended should be put to vote at the Financial Town meeting this year.

Public Comment

There was none at the time.

Old Business

Schools Budget

There were totals in the school budget worksheets that did not reference correctly, which was noted in the questions sent to the School Department.

The Budget Board discussed personnel, or FTEs and will ask about the discrepancies in the number of them in different areas of the budget.

They will also look Compensation and Benefits and compare contracts to negotiated rates to ensure they are accurate.

Retirees are included in the Health Care packages, but they only receive single coverage unless they pay the difference to receive the family plan.

They will do the same with Life Insurance.

The Budget Board discussed the fact that the schools receive a bottom-line budget and that it is their responsibility when they are analyzing the budget to ensure that they are able to work within that budget.

Also discussed were redistricting of the schools.

They will ask how many classes in each grade are at each school and how many students are in each of those classes.

There will be a School Facilities Tour by the Budget Board this Saturday, March 12th.

The Budget Board discussed the fact that Municipal Salaries seem lower in comparison to School positions, particularly in positions such as the Municipal Finance Director versus the School Business Manager.

The Budget board discussed consolidation of certain services between the Town and Schools, and it was noted that there had been discussion between them before regarding this but that there was never agreement as to who would retain the main power of the services once consolidated.

The Budget Board noted that they may mention this again in this year's Budget Message because it is an important piece.

Municipal Budget

The Budget Board went through the Municipal Budget to determine any questions that they might have to ask of the Town Administrator.

Town Administrator

Supplies and Printing were requested at \$5,000 but have not historically been spent at more than \$1,500.

Personnel

Professional Development has been requested at a \$5,000 increase and has been overspent by \$3,500 in the current year.

Also, the Budget Board wanted to question Labor Negotiations and where the funds for that would come out of.

Town Clerk

The Budget Board had already been asked to add \$10,000 to Elections for a Presidential Primary.

They questioned why Town Meeting expenses increased by such a large amount.

Also Town Clerk II seems like it will be overspent and it was questioned whether that was due to retirement of employees.

Finance

The Finance Director has been requested at an increase of 3%.

Tax Assessor

There was an Audited Salaries line where it seems like the Senior Clerk and Clerk II positions are lumped together and there is a line that is all zeros that can be removed.

Information Technologies

There is an increase requested for Hardware/Software and the Budget Board would like to know if there are any specific plans for what that is to be spent on.

Also they questioned why there was no salary increase requested for the I.T. Director.

Public Safety - Police

It was questioned that there was no increase recommended for gas/oil.

The Department will be purchasing 2 new cars.

It was noted that the salary lines may be inaccurate because they are currently in negotiations.

The Budget Board wanted to know where the Administrator's car was budgeted, as in the past it was in the Police Department's budget.

The Budget Board asked whether Overtime would be overspent, and whether Details were combined with those figures.

Animal Control

The Budget Board questioned what staff is in place currently and what their salaries are.

Rescue

It was questioned whether the Fuel line will be sufficient as there is no increase recommended.

Pension contributions were increased because of past underfunding.

The Chief does not have a recommended salary increase yet because they will receive the same percentage that the new negotiated contract gives to the rest of the staff.

Human Services

Increases in this area were attributed to an added Literacy Program and the new Senior Center.

Public Works

Under Parks and Recreation, it was again questioned whether Gas/Oil

would be sufficient because prices are on the rise but there was no recommended increase in the budget.

Public Buildings

The Receptionist position no longer exists and since the line is now all zeros it can be taken out of the budget.

Central Services

It is unknown whether Snow and Ice Removal would be a sufficient number because it is difficult to look at historical figures for an item that changes each year.

Recycling

Again Gas and Oil was questioned, and it was noted that it was something that should be looked at throughout the entire budget because prices are on the rise but it seems that none of those lines were recommended at an increase.

Library

Linda Noble will talk to the Director of the Library about their budget. It was questioned why there is no recommended increase for Health Insurance.

Boards and Commissions

The Town Council would like to come before the Budget Board and probably will want to discuss Pension Funding.

The Budget Board would like to know the final total cost of the audit and when it will be available for review.

Fixed Charges

Health Care has decreased, and it was questioned whether that was due to an increase in co-pays.

Also there is a line where Lincoln pays property taxes to North Providence, and it was questioned whether that was for a portion of the Camp Meehan property.

Linda Noble will send the questions compiled by the Budget Board's review of the budget to the Town Administrator.

Public Comment

There was none at the time.

Adjourn

Joe Renning made a motion, seconded by Peter Fucci, to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 pm.