

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

January 3, 2013

Present:

**Carl Brunetti Richard Foster Paul DiDomenico Rhonda
Lacombe Bob Turner
William DiBiasio Hagop Jawharjian Mike Babbitt William McManus**

Absent:

Maria Marcello Domenic Ricci

Call To Order

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

Minutes

The minutes of November 15, 2012 were distributed for review.

Richard Foster made a motion, seconded by Hagop Jawharjian, to approve the minutes.

The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Correspondence

There was correspondence received from the Town Administrator about the property tax cap, which will be distributed to all members of the Budget Board.

Public Comment

Pamela Azar, a teacher and resident of Limerock for 45 years, was present to bring attention to decisions by the School Committee to pursue legal action in particular cases using taxpayer dollars for cases that were dismissed, and many cases of which she feels were pursued in an unlawful manner. She also discussed the decision to use one law firm for all legal actions, including contract negotiations.

Old Business

Municipal 2012-2013 Budget

The audit has not yet been presented because it has not been approved by the Town Council.

There were reports distributed to the Budget Board that showed revenues at the anticipated level so far and expenditures lower than expected.

There were concerns for the Police Pensions because there are negotiations occurring regarding the Cost of Living Adjustment.

School Operating Budget

There was a report distributed in December that did not seem accurate based upon account balances.

Water Department

The Budget Board is still seeking clarification as to how the Water Department is legislated, how they operate, and where their specifications are in the Town Charter.

The charter has not changed regarding the Water Department, but last year there was a question of a funding source for bonds for the Water Department and whether they had the authority to do so.

The Budget Board would like to see the legislation that allows that process.

The Budget Board discussed that the Town of Lincoln owns the Water Department building, equipment, etc. and therefore it is similar to the schools where they have ownership of it as long as it used for their purpose, otherwise it is turned back over to the Town.

The Budget Board will ask the Town Administrator for any information that would show that to be true.

The Water Department Charter precedes the Town of Lincoln Charter, and shows that the Finance Director has more financial control over it than the Town Administrator.

The Budget Board will request to be on the agenda of a Water Department meeting to discuss all of their questions.

A Budget Board Tour of the Schools to observe the new technology plan in action still has not occurred.

The Superintendent has stated that she would set up a tour at the same time as the School Committee who also have not taken a tour of the new plan yet.

It is unclear how much of the new plan has been implemented, but there were 2 Professional Development days for the teachers in the summer. An article written about the program noted a language lab

and elementary typing lab had been completed.

New Business

Municipal Capital Projects 2013-2014

A New High School is in a preliminary planning stage to be looked at in the next 3-5 years.

It is not yet clear whether there would be renovations to the current building, or whether it would be knocked down and rebuilt.

A survey has said the building could be kept, but more needs to be studied about which method would be more cost effective as well as security concerns and where students would be placed during the process.

The Town Administrator hopes to have a plan for the addition to Police Station in his proposal for next year's budget.

There is an energy conservation company that met with the School Department which will complete and provide a 20-year loan for energy relevant renovations to all of the schools.

Additionally, the company guarantees savings equal to the cost of renovations.

The Budget Board discussed meeting with the company to find out if it might be worth doing a study with the company to find out if it made financial sense to complete such projects when some schools are so new and some are so old that they may not be used in their current state in up to 20 years.

The Budget Board discussed the Town's debt, which is not near the maximum amount they would be allowed to borrow, and it was also noted that some of the debt would be retired within the next few years.

For the Barney Pond project, there is going to be an added bridge/walkway.

Upcoming Scheduled Meetings include a School Committee Budget Workshop on January 23rd and a Budget Board Meeting on January 24th.

Public Comment

There was no further public comment or questions at the time.

Adjourn

Richard Foster made a motion, seconded by Bob Turner, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.