



BOARD OF FINANCE

LYME TOWN HALL
480 HAMBURG ROAD
LYME, CT 06371

BOARD OF FINANCE
Regular Meeting

The Lyme Board of Finance held a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lyme Town Hall, 480 Hamburg Road, Lyme, CT 06371.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Hagan (Chair), Dave Brown, Judith Duran, Herb Ross, Kathryn Wayland, Peter Evankow, Jarrod Leonardo (alternate present but not seated), Lori Caine (alternate present but not seated), Jennifer Thomas (Secretary)

ABSENT MEMBERS: Bruce Anderson (alternate)

SELECTMAN PRESENT: Steven Mattson, First Selectman, John Kiker, Third Selectman
Several members of the public were also present.

The meeting was called to order by Hagan at 6:30 p.m.

Hagan called for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2019 regular meeting. Evankow made the motion, Duran seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Regular Meeting

Public Comment

Hagan opened the meeting up for public comment. No members of the public spoke.

Budget Presentation from Regional School District #18

Ian Neviasser, Region #18 Superintendent presented. Also present: Stacey Leonardo and Mary Powell St. Louis, Lyme Board of Education representatives

Neviasser distributed some materials to the board for review. The Board of Education has voted to bring the budget to referendum on May 7th. The proposed budget shows a 2.29% increase over the prior year. Increase drivers include salaries, benefits, special education costs, and maintenance costs. There are reductions in several line items, including transportation and debt services.

Neviasser stated that the pre-k expansion classroom upgrades will cost between \$86,000 and \$87,000, which is much less than the original \$180,000.

Hagan asked why we are offering this program if it is not state mandated, and whether a 3-year-old program would be added in the future.

Wayland asked whether a sliding scale tuition had been considered and expressed frustration that the expansion seemed sudden, and the Board of Finance was unable to answer questions from the public.

Neviasser stated that the BOE felt this was the right time to add the program and wants every child in town to have an equal opportunity. The BOE discussed charging tuition but felt that Region 18 offers many programs free to the students that are not state mandated.

Several larger projects were touched on, including upgrading tennis courts over the next several years, redesigning the middle school media center, and replacing carpeting at Lyme School.

Duran asked when the Lyme School gym floor will be redone, and Neviasser said this is scheduled for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Hagan asked Neviaser to give the board an update on teacher pension legislation. Neviaser stated that the proposed legislation would have the towns pay a portion of the teacher pensions, increasing over three years. This legislation has not passed.

Evankow asked why Region 18 is paying a premium on teacher salaries. Neviaser stated that Region 18 tends to be in the middle compared to surrounding towns, as well as towns with similar socioeconomic make up. Region 18 has a high percentage of upper tier teachers because our teachers to stay within the district for many years.

Neviaser stated that funds not used are returned to the towns as a credit, with the exception of 1% of the budget that Region 18 holds in a sinking fund for projects as needed, which is voted on by the BOE.

Review of 3rd quarter budget/outlook for year end

Steven Mattson, First Selectman presented

Mattson gave the board updated drafts of the proposed 2019-2020 budget and 3rd quarter report. Student count is down from 20.4% this year to 19.3% for 2019-2020, bringing education costs down 2.5%. Current year surplus estimate is \$420,000. This allows the town to have a zero increase budget for the year.

Hagan stated that although we will bring in the same amount of tax revenue as 2018-2019, because of the property revaluation, some people may see an increase on their tax bill while others will see a decrease. The town's budget has not increased.

Brown asked about the information being distributed to the public regarding the revaluation.

Mattson stated that the Selectman's newsletter will be going out in the next week, and the information will be posted on the town's website and Facebook page as well.

Wayland asked if the health insurance numbers have come down, and Mattson stated that the numbers are not in yet, but he is hopeful that they will be less than the 8% increase proposed.

Discuss and Approve the 2019-2020 budget

Hagan asked for a motion to approve the proposed 2019-2020 budget. Brown moved the motion, seconded by Ross, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business- None

New Business

Brown stated that residents continue to ask questions and send letters to the Board of Finance members regarding the Region 18 budget, and would like guidance on how to let people know that those are questions that need to be addressed to the Board of Education because the proposed budget is presented to them for approval. Brown is encouraging concerned citizens to go to the Region 18 Board of Education members if they are questioning how the budget was approved.

Mattson stated the Lyme Public Hall may request funds in the next year or two to hire an archivist once the volunteer archivist steps down. The Lyme Ambulance Corps may ask for funds in the next couple of years, as donations do not meet their operating costs and are spending from their endowment.

Mattson stated that the Lyme Library would like to hold focus groups with hired moderators in the current fiscal year. The Library would like approval from the Board of Finance to use \$2,000-\$2,500 of their trust fund to pay for the moderators. The board discussed and approved this request.

Adjournment-Hagan called for a motion to adjourn. Evankow made the motion, Wayland seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.