

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING_MINUTES (MAY 25, 2023)

The Town Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by David Lahm with approximately 60 in attendance. The Meeting was then organized by the selection of Don Gerber as Moderator. The Moderator asked Linda Winzer, Town Clerk, to read the Call to the Meeting:

“Electors and citizens qualified to vote in Town Meeting are hereby notified that a Town Meeting will be held at the Lyme Town Hall, 480 Hamburg Road, Lyme, Connecticut, on Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 6:00 PM, for presentation and approval of the following agenda items:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the Town of Lyme Annual Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022.
2. Consider and act on estimates of the Board of Finance for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024.

Dated at Lyme, Connecticut, this 11th day of May 2023
David Lahm
For the Board of Selectmen”

The first order of business to come before the Meeting was to acknowledge receipt of the Town of Lyme Annual Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022.

Moved and seconded. David Lahm thanked Sirge and Marsha Orzech who put together and printed the Town Report, as well as those who contributed material for the report. He also acknowledged Parker Lord, who the Town Report is dedicated to, thanking him for his long and continuing service to the Town.

Voted: Affirmative. Vote was unanimous.

The second order of business to come before the Meeting was to consider and act on estimates of the Board of Finance for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024.

Moved and seconded. David Lahm commented that the budget came in very well. He stated that it was a challenge, and freely admits that he had a lot of help in preparing it. The good news is that the recommendation to the Board of Finance is to reduce the mill rate .45 to 19.5. He stated that we are going through a revaluation, which does not have any effect this year. Home values are going up, but that does not mean that taxes will be going up. We have a budget, and we must set the mill rate to the grand list to meet that goal. Higher grand list means a lower mill rate; lower grand list means a higher mill rate. It doesn't necessarily affect what people write on their checks. He then asked Alan Sheiness, Chair of the Board of Finance, to share his presentation of highlights of the budget. He reiterated what David Lahm had stated regarding the revaluation. Revaluation is not some built in price increase on property taxes, it's more of creating a tally of the value of the properties in town. He went on to explain the items in the General Fund Balance Summary, Operating Expense, and Capital Expense slides of his presentation (attached), which was followed by a time for questions. Deb Andreas raised concerns regarding the \$355,000 of the \$390,000 Bridges and Roads expense line. Alan Sheiness stated that the monies are to address a section of Mitchell Hill Road that is difficult or unsafe for the school bus and plow truck. Deb Andreas then questioned whether the public is going to be involved in the decision of what will be done. Alan Sheiness stated that it's the Board of Finance's job to make sure the money is there for projects, so he asked First Selectman David Lahm to comment. Mr. Lahm stated that the most

dangerous road in Lyme is the section Mitchell Hill Road that is to be addressed. He stated that it is basically a one lane road with a steep drop off in that area and is a hazard. As First Selectman, it is his job to eliminate hazards to protect the community, and that's what he's doing. Ms. Andreas agreed that 150 feet of the roadway is dangerous, but the additional 300 feet that is being proposed is not dangerous, and there are many roads in Lyme that are. Mr. Lahm stated that they have to start somewhere. He made his living in risk assessment, and there are two things that are looked at – the likelihood of the event happening and the severity if the event occurs. What puts Mitchell Hill Road at the top of the list is that if an accident happens, it is going to be severe. At this point, the Moderator stated that there had been adequate discussion and moved the meeting back to the motion on the floor, which is regarding approving the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Voted: Affirmative with one nay.

There being no further business to come before the Meeting, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Meeting. Voted: Affirmative. The Meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

The Board of Finance met immediately after the meeting and set the new mill rate at 19.5.

Recorded by: Town Clerk