

Minutes of Litchfield Budget Committee

March 16, 2015

Present: Rodney Allen, David Blocher, Don Jenkins, Richard Lane

Absent: Judy Bourget, Pat Soboleski, Elton Wade

The committee received word that Elton Wade was unable to attend due to a medical emergency. We wished him a speedy recovery.

Reports:

1. Reviewed and accepted minutes from Feb 16 meeting.
2. Richard reported that the Selectmen began their review of departmental requests for the 2015-16 budget at their meeting on March 9. They want all to have all requests in by the last Monday in April.
3. The Selectmen are holding a public hearing on March 18 to discuss the Road Advisory Committee's proposal to discontinue 7 town roads in order to save the cost of maintenance and improvements.
4. Richard reported that the Road Advisory Committee is working on a plan for road improvements and maintenance, including bridges and culverts. Litchfield has 31 miles of road, most of which is in poor condition. Most of the roads were never constructed with a proper base and are difficult to maintain. The committee expects to determine an annual amount needed to upgrade and maintain the roads over a reasonable life cycle.
5. The RSU #4 School Board will begin holding budget meetings on March 18, April 1 and April 15. Elton and David plan to attend. Elton will invite the Litchfield members of the School Committee a future meeting to discuss the expected impact on the real estate tax rate and ways to increase voter participation in the RSU budget adoption meeting.
6. Rodney and Elton have their terms of office expire this year. This will leave three openings (including replacement for Judy) for the coming elections in June.

Work Session:

7. Committee members discussed how to collect data on the expected replacement of existing capital equipment and planned new projects for the Capital Investment Program. Don is working to revise and simplify the worksheets. Rodney and Richard will work with the Fire Department, Don with Trudy on the Town Office, and David will work with Public Works and the Transfer Station. Don will combine the data and give it to Trudy to develop her proposal to the Selectmen.

Next Meeting:

8. Next meeting is 6:30 PM on Monday, April 20 at the Town Hall
 - a. Report on recent activities
 - b. Discuss RSU#4 proposed budget
 - c. Discuss (partial) town budget requests
 - d. Discuss alternatives for funding capital requests
 - e. Review status of Capital Investment Program progress and issues
 - f. Plan how and when the committee will vote on recommendations for the Town Warrant

Respectfully submitted,

David Blocher, Secretary