



**TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 12, 2011**

Mark Lunt, Chair District 1 2012
Lori Pomelow, Vice Chair At Large 2012
Roger Cote, At Large 2011
Michael Bowie, District 2 2012
Roger Bickford, District 2 2013
Fern Laroche, Jr., At Large 2013
Gina Mason, District 1 2013

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. The Chairman, Mark Lunt, called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Bowie, Cote, Laroche, Lunt, and Bickford. Councilor Mason and Pomelow were excused. Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; David Brooks, Police Chief; Michael Cote, Code Enforcement Officer; P. Sean Galipeau, Fire Chief; Jessica Maloy, Finance Director; Ryan Leighton, Town Engineer; Mark Stevens, Recreation Director; Verla Brooks, Parks Director; Diane Nadeau, Librarian; Wayne Ricker, Solid Waste; School Committee Members Traci Austin, Prudence Grant, George Caron; Richard Green, Superintendent of Schools; Cathy Messmer, School Bookkeeper; Budget Advisory Board Members Debbie Barry, Thomas Barry, Dorothy Fitzgerald, and Jeff Ganong; Ken Wells, Water Commissioner; and approximately 65 citizens in attendance.

PUBLIC HEARING

SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Superintendent Green presented the school budget totaling \$13,774,300, which he said is \$122,042 less than last year's school budget. This is a tentative school budget because there are a number of things that have to happen before they know what their final figures are. He said the School Committee's goal this year is to present a budget that does not increase Lisbon's local taxes. The budget is less than last year's budget, but because of the additional reduction in state subsidy, he said, they are not quite at a zero percent increase. He pointed out that the total budget, including the Adult Education budget is \$13,937,754 and the amount that needs to be raised locally is \$5,455,469. Although the overall budget has decreased, they are receiving \$197,269 less in state subsidy, which currently leaves them \$168,298 away from having at a zero percent increase on the local budget and based upon the current projections, he said, he felt confident that he would be able to do that. The biggest item they are waiting for is for the state budget to be passed.

Superintendent Green said they would continue to address the NEASC concerns by upgrading the heating system at the middle school, installing new boilers, and converting both systems over to natural gas, which would save money in next year's budget. The Facilities Committee is looking at short and long term building renovations and will be creating a plan. He pointed out that they were able to maintain all of their programs and services in some shape or form, although maybe not ideal, he said, but at least we were able to keep those services in some manner. This year's focus was upon decreasing the amount raised above the Essential Program Services (EPS), which decreased \$211,886 bringing that total to \$536,526, which is still not enough, he said, to bring about a zero percent increase to Lisbon's local taxes. There were three areas with increases. 1) \$11,390 in Adult Education, which has to do with the decrease in state subsidy, 2) \$10,000 in maintenance, facilities and grounds for classroom maintenance, and 3) \$52,607 in Debt Service that was transferred to Purchase Services to purchase boilers for the middle and high schools to convert them over to natural gas. Although it's an increase in Purchase Services, it won't be a decrease really in Debt Services due to the new bond approved last year.

Lisbon received a grant for \$157,503 from the federal government to retain jobs. He said, although that money is not officially in the budget this year because it's a grant, any jobs, programs, or

services retained because of it would need to be added back into the budget in 2012-2013. He briefly mentioned the achievement progress list. He said the state's application for money for the "race to the top" was not approved, but they did receive money for high schools for their Title I program, which came out with a list of the 10 lower achieving high schools in the state. It's critical that you maintain progress in math and reading over a three year combined period. He said he was concerned and met with his staff to discuss the fact that our high school did not make any progress at all, and in fact had a decrease in their performance or progress. Percentage wise last year we did show much more progress, however progress went from 7.4% last year to (a negative) -3.56% this year so it is something we need to watch and stay focused on, he said. The community school did show progress this year.

Superintendent Green pointed out that the current budget version dated March 10, 2011 is available on-line.

MUNICIPAL PRESENTATION

Mr. Eldridge presented the municipal budget totaling \$6,338,696 excluding the \$574,198 Androscoggin County budget. He said the Council's goal is to provide the same level of service and bring the tax rate in flat. According to the survey, residents rated highest services from the Fire, Police, and School Departments. This budget includes an overall 1.75% wage increase. How to handle the revaluation is still being discussed, he said. He recommended a \$500,000 bond initiative that includes work on the MTM building, E.T. Smith Hose building, the Public Works garage, and replacing the Fisher Road Bridge. The first year would be \$9,200 for interest only, and then \$68,000 for the following 10 years.

Mrs. Maloy said 19.8% of our money goes towards assessment and debt services. Public Works, Public Safety, and General Government make up 77.7% of the budget. Of General Government, 46% is for insurance, 27.6% is for wages, and 18.4% is for contractual services, which represents 30.5% of that budget total. General Government is 3.3% higher than last year. She said we will be contracting out technology and assessing services. In summary, our budget reflects a wage and benefits decrease of \$174,231, which is a net decrease of 6.5 positions. There is a 2% health insurance decrease. Equipment capital increased \$65,000 due to the matching funds needed for the Route 196 paving project. Contractual services increased \$82,000 due to contracting out our technology and assessing services. Debt services increased \$20,000. She pointed out alternatives and potential savings that may come into play as the Council considers its final numbers for adoption.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The following residents spoke: Ken Wells, Teresa Collier, Blaine Davis, Larry Fillmore, Daniel Henton, Lisa Ward, and Dorothy Fitzgerald. The public wanted to know what was included in General Government and why tax bills went up when the tax rate went from 25 to 21. Mr. Wells asked that the School present projected totals for this school year's end at the May 3 meeting.

Daniel Henton said he was not in favor of giving raises of any kind to employees and encouraged those who were not happy with what they were being paid to look elsewhere for jobs that pay more. He said he would like to see better choices being made instead of laying off employees or forcing some to retire.

Lisa Ward confirmed that the positions being decreased were tied directly to the social security and insurance decreases. She confirmed that the consolidation included Public Works and Solid Waste, that someone was retiring, and that someone else would be taking on more responsibility and getting a raise. Mr. Eldridge said that was correct. Lisa Ward said the only other raise she saw in there was for the Recreation Department, which she said deserves it. She asked about the personnel changes in the Finance Department and Police Department. Mrs. Maloy said in the Finance Department there would be one full time position moving to part-time. Mr. Eldridge said the

proposed staffing changes in the Police Department are still being discussed and that one position they are contemplating putting back in because of some things that they were working on.

Mrs. Fitzgerald questioned the salary survey Mrs. Maloy used. I agree with the work that she did on it, she said, but I don't know which towns were being used for comparison. She said that the revaluation was very badly needed, that it should go out to bid, and that she supported funding the revaluation in a 3-year program. She encouraged the Council to bring back a full time Assessor to keep up with the new valuation from year to year.

Councilor Lunt said he agreed with everything Mrs. Fitzgerald said and seeing no further comments, the public hearing closed.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTE (2011-47) Councilor Lunt, seconded by Councilor Larochelle moved to adjourn at 8:20 PM.
Order passed - Vote 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM/MMC