

**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DELIBERATIVE SESSION  
February 10, 2018  
The State of New Hampshire**

Time, Place: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Campbell High School Auditorium.

Present: Moderator, Mr. John G. Regan, presiding.

School Board members: Mr. Brian Bourque, Chair; Mrs. Christine Harrison, Vice Chair; Mr. Barka, Mrs. MacDonald, Mr. York.

Mr. James L. O'Neill, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator; Mrs. Michele Flynn, Administrative Assistant; Diane Gorrow, Attorney for the District.

Budget Committee members: Mrs. Cynthia Couture, Chair; Mrs. Keri Douglas, Vice Chair; Mr. Robert Keating, Mrs. Jennifer Bourque, Mr. James Spotts, Mr. Dennis Miller, vacancy.

Ballot clerks: Mrs. Trisha Regan

Mr. Regan invited members to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Regan introduced Mr. Phil Reed, Vice Moderator, and reviewed the Moderator's rules and protocol for the Deliberative Session according to state law.

Mr. Regan introduced Mr. Brian Bourque, School Board Chair. Mr. Bourque introduced School Board members, SAU staff, and attorney.

Mr. Regan introduced Mrs. Cynthia Couture, Chairperson of the Budget Committee. Mrs. Couture introduced Budget Committee members.

Mr. Regan announced that elections will be held on March 13, 2018 from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm at CHS.

*Note: The order of business of the Deliberative Session is sometimes conducted out of the warrant articles' numeric sequence. Recording activity in chronological order would make the minutes difficult to follow; therefore, the articles will be listed, with action taken thereon, in the order in which they were listed on the warrant.*

As is customary, Mr. Regan asked voters if they were in favor of allowing non-voters and employees of the school district who were in attendance to comment during the meeting.

*The majority was in favor of allowing non-voters and/or employees of the district to comment during deliberative session by voice vote.*

Mr. Regan read Article A.

**ARTICLE A.**

*To elect by ballot the following School District Officers:*

<i>School Board Member</i>	<i>3-Year Term</i>
<i>School Board Member</i>	<i>3-Year Term</i>
<i>School Board Member</i>	<i>2-Year Term</i>

The Moderator opened discussion of Article A.

Hearing no discussion, the Moderator indicated **Article A stands as written.**

Mr. Regan read Article 1 and indicated that Mrs. Couture would speak to the article.

**ARTICLE 1**

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by the vote at the first session of the annual school district meeting, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Twenty-Two Million, Three Hundred Forty-Two Thousand, Six Hundred Fourteen Dollars (\$22,342,614)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Twenty-Two Million, Eight Hundred Six Thousand, Ninety-Eight Dollars (\$22,806,098) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Litchfield School District or by law; or the School Board may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.*

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.63 and was not recommended by the School Board by a vote of 0-4-0. The Article was recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 5-0-0.*

Mrs. Couture made the following statements:

School District Budget was received in November. The Superintendent and Business Administrator reviewed district goals for Budget Committee members. Budget Committee members reviewed line by line over two meetings in November and December. The budget information was presented by the School Board representative, Superintendent, Business Administrator and department heads as needed before voting. Final votes on budgets and Warrant Articles on December 14.

**Decision Criteria**

Mrs. Couture explained the Budget Committee made their recommendations based on the following criteria:

- Consider history of actual spending of previous years using 3 year averages
- Consider School District Priorities as presented by educational professionals
- Consider year to date actual spending of current budget
- Consider student enrollment projections

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- Consider the rationale for why dollars are being requested by the school district and educational professionals as well as any data presented
- Consider what was a reasonable budget to present to the voters given fixed cost increases and revenue projections.

Mrs. Couture presented the school district budget review:

- The School District reduced their proposed salary and benefits by \$200,000 for attrition based on historical averages. Attrition is when an employee leaves and another is hired at a lesser salary.
- The District made reductions in many other areas of the budget.
- Projected revenues are down due to State Aid reductions based on enrollment.
- Enrollments continue to decline.
- The cost for full day kindergarten was included in the budget covered by reductions in other areas of the budget.
- The Budget Committee made reductions including the reduction of the costs associated with full time kindergarten. Additional reductions related to full day kindergarten totaled \$51,500.
- The Recommended budget is \$33,941 more than last years approved budget; an increase of 0.15%.
- The Default Budget is \$463,484 higher than the proposed budget.

#### **Areas of Major Impact**

- Salaries \$100,000 Increase  
Even after an attrition reduction of \$200,000, salaries increased due to the approval of the teacher and support staff contracts last year
- Transportation \$26,356 Increase  
Contractual increase
- Technology Services \$99,800 Increase  
Replacing old computers
- Special Services \$125,630  
This includes an increase of \$83,240 in Handicapped Tuition.

#### **Potential Tax Impact**

Mrs. Couture indicated the FY19 Recommended Operating budget is \$22,342,614 and is projected to have a tax impact of \$0.63. She noted this will result in an estimated \$189 increase on a home valued at \$300,000 or \$284 on a home valued at \$450,000.

Mrs. Couture commented the FY19 Default budget is \$22,806,098 and is projected to have a tax impact of \$1.15. She noted this would result in an increase of \$345 on a home valued at \$300,000 or \$518 on a home valued at \$450,000.

Ralph Boehm, 6 Gibson Drive, provided some default budget law history. He indicated that the intent of the default budget law was that the default budget was never supposed to be higher than

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the proposed operating budget, but lawyers, the municipal association and others decided to interpret the law the way they wanted so that the default budget would result in being higher. He commented that there are bills in the legislature that will fix this law, but lobbying by the NH Municipal Association and NHSBA make passing the fix difficult. Mr. Boehm believes he knows the intent of the law. He indicated that this year the School Board is putting forward a default budget with a half million dollars higher than the proposed operating budget. He commented the School Board can make the default budget total any amount they want and no one can fix it. Mr. Boehm noted in 2002 a lawyer came up with an interpretation that resulted failure of all warrant articles. He believes the operating budget is too high, the default budget is too high, and the per pupil cost is increasing to \$19,000 per pupil, which is the highest in the state.

Mrs. Couture commented the Budget Committee has nothing to do with the default budget.

William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, commented the enrollment projections are down. He asked if the proposed operating budget includes reduction per projection.

Mrs. Couture indicated the proposed budget includes the reduction of two teachers.

Mr. Spencer asked if those two teachers are included in the default budget.

Mr. Bourque indicated the two teachers are included in the default budget because the positions are in the teachers' contract and contracted positions have always been included in the default budget.

Mr. Spencer indicated that he understands the rationale, but wanted to verify what was included in the default budget.

Mr. Bourque, referring to Mr. Boehm's statements, clarified that the School Board recommended budget submitted to the Budget Committee was approximately \$130,000 higher than the default budget. He indicated the NH Department of Revenue has a copy of the default budget, the Budget Committee accepted the default budget and the School Board voted on the default budget. He mentioned that the cost per pupil average in Litchfield is approximately \$14,000 and the State average is \$15,300.

Mr. Boehm commented that teachers are fired and rehired every year and it is not contractual. He commented that anyone can play games with the cost per student. He indicated his cost per pupil was calculated by taking the total of the proposed budget and dividing it by the total number of students in the district.

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, commented that she does not feel as if the default budget can be just any number. She indicated this is about trust. She noted the Budget Committee takes the budget and can reduce it to anything, so we could never have a law that says the default has to be lower than the proposed operating budget because if the Budget Committee reduced the operating budget to zero, the default would be higher. Mrs. Corbeil commented there are two different boards, two different perspectives and two different budgets. The Budget Committee

has a certain amount of power to make changes and the School Board has a certain amount of power to make changes.

William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, commented that the inclusion of Kindergarten costs in the default budget “muddies” the issue.

Mr. Bourque commented the operating budget included costs to operating the kindergarten.

Dennis Miller, 37 Wren Street, commented in 2016 there were 1,314 students and an audited financial statement of \$20,614,000; in 2019 the projected number of students is 1,219 and we are asking for over \$22M. He indicated the district never spent 100% of the budget. He noted we are asking for \$1.6M more for less students. Mr. Miller commented that trajectory is unsustainable.

Mr. Bourque commented costs do increase annually, for example teachers’ contracts and support contracts.

Mr. Miller commented that he understands that costs rise. He was just making a statement that we ask for more every year with declining enrollment and it is not sustainable.

Mrs. Corbeil commented that there are always going to be cost changes. She indicated that the community should decide what they can afford.

Mrs. Couture commented one of the impact is the revenues as we are losing approximately \$300,000 for the coming year due to declining enrollment.

Tiffany MacKinnon, 30 Burgess Street, pointed out there is a big development coming into town as well as other house and new families. She noted there are teachers we want to keep and there are students that need more help in math. She commented we need to make sure the children get what they need.

Mrs. Couture indicated the Budget Committee looks at resources every year and analyzes what is reasonable to present to the voters.

Mrs. MacKinnon commented it is important to consider the numbers increasing again. She indicated that we are starting to see a push up again and she asked the community to keep that in mind when voting. She noted when there are children that need more assistance they are not going to lose if a teacher can help.

Mr. Spencer commented the enrollments are declining. He indicated that the classes are getting smaller as they move through the schools. He noted we will have enrollment in town from new people moving in, but we do not have the numbers. He asked why the School Board chose not to recommend the budget the Budget Committee presented.

Mr. Bourque responded the School Board did not recommend that budget because the Budget Committee reduced \$500,000 from the School Board recommended budget.

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Mr. Spencer commented that was for full day kindergarten, which is addressed through a warrant article. He did not understand why the School Board is telling people to vote for the default budget.

Mr. Bourque commented the School Board is not telling people to vote for the default budget. He indicated the Budget Committee' budget is not the budget the School Board presented to the Budget Committee.

Mr. Spencer commented that is a ridiculous excuse. He indicated something like that takes away all his trust from the School Board.

Mr. Bourque commented to Mr. Spencer that if he looks back when he served on the Budget Committee, there were budgets that were not recommended by the Budget Committee.

Mr. Spencer commented what the Budget Committee has proposed is within \$50,000 of the budget they received. He believes it is ridiculous not to agree with it.

Mrs. Couture commented beyond the reduction of kindergarten, the Budget Committee only reduced a little over \$50,000.

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, asked if the Budget Committee supports the article.

Mrs. Couture indicated that the Budget Committee does support the article.

Mrs. Corbeil inquired the Budget Committee removed kindergarten and only took another \$50,000 from the budget.

Mrs. Couture responded that the School Board reduced much of their own budget.

Mrs. Corbeil commented that the Budget Committee has been asking for years for people to do the right thing and it looks like it is heading in that direction. She asked if that is what the Budget Committee wanted.

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, commented that the default budget would include the kindergarten money reduced from the proposed budget. She asked what would happen if the default budget passes and article 2 passes?

Mr. Bourque commented the default budget does not include all the kindergarten costs. He indicated it only includes the numbers for staffing.

Mrs. Hirte was concerned if the default budget passes and article 2 passes it would that be a double dipping or overlap issue. She commented that she assumes you would adjust the budget to take that into consideration. Mr. Bourque affirmed.

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Mr. Spencer asked what the School Board would do if the district ends us with the default and the article passes. He commented the School Board can do whatever they want with it.

Mr. Bourque commented if that did occur, the money would not be spent.

Mr. Spencer commented if the article fails, the School Board cannot use the money in the default budget for kindergarten, which is why it does not make sense for the money to be included. He believes it is a trust issue and commented that no one knows what the School Board would do with that money.

Mrs. Couture asked the School Board to reconsider their recommendation or non-recommendation of Article 1. She commented they may not use the money in the default budget, but it still has a higher impact on taxes. She indicated it would be better if the School Board would recommend the budget.

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, asked if all the articles are approved would the School Board have what is needed to continue to run the district at the current level. Mr. Bourque responded in the affirmative.

Community Member (name inaudible), asked why the default budget does not include the \$50,000 reduction. Mrs. Couture indicated that the default is calculated with sum totals.

***Jen Bourque, 1 Westview Drive, made a motion to amend Article 1 to read:***

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by the vote at the first session of the annual school district meeting, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Twenty-Two Million, Three Hundred Forty-Two Thousand, Six Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$22,342,613)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Twenty-Two Million, Eight Hundred Six Thousand, Ninety-Eight Dollars (\$22,806,098) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Litchfield School District or by law; or the School Board may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.*

***The motion was seconded.***

Mrs. Bourque commented that she made the motion because the article has to be amended at Deliberative Session for the School Board to reconsider their vote.

***The motion passed by voice vote.***

William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, commented that he hopes the School Board will change their recommendation on Article 1.

Nicole Fordi, 85 Page Road, asked when the voters will see the amended changes on the article.

The Moderator indicated the amended changes will be on the March 13, 2018 ballot.

Mr. Bourque commented after Deliberative Session, the Budget Committee will have to revote the article and after they meet, the School Board will meet and revote the article.

Hearing no further amendments or discussion, Mr. Regan indicated that **Article 1 will appear on the ballot as amended.**

*Keri Douglas, 8 Pheasant Lane, made a motion to restrict the reconsideration of Article 1. Mr. Spencer seconded. The motion passed by voice vote.*

Mr. Regan read Article 2 and indicated that Mrs. Harrison would speak to the article.

## **ARTICLE 2**

***Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Nineteen Thousand, Seven Hundred Thirty-Two Dollars (\$ 519,732) for the purpose of funding the costs associated with the expansion of the Kindergarten program at Griffin Memorial School from half day to full day? This appropriation is anticipated to be offset by \$96,280 in aid from the State of New Hampshire.***

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.48 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 4-0-0 and was recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-0-0.*

Mrs. Harrison spoke to the article. She presented the following information:

- The mission of the district is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth.
- Data shows we are not meeting the goals of the mission statement in intellectual, physical and social/emotional growth.
- Currently in our half day kindergarten program, we fit 6 hours of instruction into 2.5 hours.
- There is no time for socialization, which means we are not growing students in the areas that are needed.
- Full day kindergarten provides 1,080 hours per year; half day kindergarten provides 450 hours per year. With the half day program teachers have to deliver the same full day content in less than half the time.
- Full day kindergarten supports our mission by providing more time to deliver the state designed content program, providing activities, socialization and growth.
- More time in the day with the full day program means more time for special supports (i.e. occupational therapy, English language learning, speech therapy, etc.).
- The mission also states the district is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities, which can be done with more certainty in a full day program.
- Varied kindergarten experiences (i.e. private, public, none, etc.) result in a wide range of abilities coming into our school and gaps in readiness for grade 1.



- Teachers spend much time assessing those needs and developing instruction for those students.
- Currently, we have to provide remedial programs for those students that are not ready for grade 1 to catch up.
- Many families have the advantage of stay at home moms who can help fill in some of the gaps, but the children miss out of socialization. Many families do not have those advantages.
- This proposal for full day kindergarten includes an option for a half day program for those parents that prefer a half day schedule.
- Nationally, 81% of school aged children are enrolled in a full day program.
- Test scores show that 37% of incoming first graders are testing below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading and the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in math.
- In NH, 87% of towns offer a full day kindergarten program; some offer a tuition program.
- GMS ranks 54 out of 229; the District ranks 41 out of 153 districts.
- Schools in the top 10 and districts in the top 10 offer full day kindergarten.
- Litchfield deserves an equitable program and deserves to be in the top 10.
- Financially, investing in the early years of a child's life sets the foundation for all learning and growth.
- It is more efficient biologically and economically to do things right the first time.
- An increase in state aid, the use of impact fees and the re-allocation of teaching positions will lower the tax impact for the first year.

***Brian Bourque, 1 Westview Drive, made a motion to amend Article 2 to read:***

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand, Two Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$774,242) for the purpose of funding the costs associated with the expansion of the Kindergarten program at Griffin Memorial School from half day to full day? This appropriation will be offset by \$430,650 to come from state and local revenues.*

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.38*

***Natalie Hirte seconded.***

Mr. Bourque explained that they were notified that the Board of Selectmen approved the use of \$231,700 for costs associated with full day kindergarten; \$102,670 will come from the fund balance and \$96,280 will come from state aid. He indicated that the district has to gross appropriate the revenues into the total cost and note the amount that will come from state and local revenues.

William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, asked why the cost went from what was proposed (\$519,732) to \$522,000.

Mr. Bourque noted that the cost reflects the purchase of the portable classrooms vs a lease.

Mr. Spencer commented the Board of Selectmen approved the use of impact fees and you mentioned that \$102,670 will come from the fund balance. He indicated on the MS-27 a \$200,000 fund balance is projected. He asked if this is where the money will come from.

Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator, explained traditionally when preparing the MS-27 we project a \$200,000 fund balance; however, based on trends in the budget there will be more than \$200,000 remaining and enough to be able to take from the fund balance to pay off the modular purchase.

Mr. Spencer commented that it is unknown what the fund balance will be. Mr. Izbicki indicated it is anticipated.

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, thanked the School Board, Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen for coming together to get to these amounts.

Dennis Miller, 37 Wren Street, commented that Article 4 is proposing to take \$50,000 from the fund balance for a capital reserve fund. He asked what the order is for article funding.

Mr. Bourque indicated that Article 2 would be funded first.

Mr. Miller asked about the feeling of the School Board if some of that money has to come out of unspent special education funds.

Mr. Bourque indicated that the School Board will not take money out of the special education unassigned fund balance.

***The motion passed by voice vote.***

Phil Reed, 7 Forest Lane, thanked the School Board for changing the kindergarten program and bringing this forward.

Ralph Boehm, 6 Gibson Drive, commented that he always thought it was ludicrous to ask the Board of Selectmen to approve the use of impact fees. He indicated that although he supports kindergarten, a full day program is not mandatory. He noted that one can get just as many experts to say that a full day program is not good as one can get to say that it is good. Mr. Boehm commented all students progress at their own rate and everyone in grade 1 needs to be at the grade 1 level and so on for all other grade levels. He indicated that it is up to the parent if they want to enroll their child in a kindergarten program.

Mrs. Harrison agreed that the full day program is not mandatory, but we are seeing an increase in enrollments in full day kindergarten in the state.

Referring to the proposed changes to the warrant article, Mrs. Harrison indicated one time startup costs will be a net cost of \$343,592. She noted recurring costs after applying additional state aid will be \$155,360 and the estimated tax impact will decrease over time.

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Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, commented that she used to sub in the district schools and the pace teachers have to go through with the half day program is intense. She indicated teachers have to cram 6 hours into 2.5 hours and it is non-stop. She understands that full day kindergarten is not mandatory or even necessary to some people, but in seeing what students do in grade 1 compared to what many of us did in grade 1, it is necessary. Mrs. Hirte commented that students are doing so much more in content and expectations of literacy and math; the rigor is much more increased. She indicated that she is in support of a full day program.

***William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, made a motion to amend Warrant Article 2 to read:***

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand, Two Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$774,242) for the purpose of funding the costs associated with the expansion of the Kindergarten program at Griffin Memorial School from half day to full day? This appropriation is anticipated to be offset by \$430,650 to come from state and local revenues.*

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.38*

***The motion was seconded.***

Nicole Fordi, 85 Page Road, commented that the wording of the amendment will be difficult for voters to understand.

Natalie Hirte, 14 Lund Street, asked if there is a certainty with the anticipated language. She commented if there is absolute surety of the revenues, the language should stay as proposed.

Mrs. Harrison indicated that the additional state aid is from the Keno bill, which in this case is based on the projection of 61 kindergarten students and an additional 10 students from outside the district.

Mrs. Hirte commented that “anticipated” means the amount may change. She indicated impact fees are guaranteed so keeping the word “will” in the article is actually correct. She asked if there is a way to determine a guaranteed number.

Mr. Bourque commented that the amount is stated in the amended warrant article.

Mrs. Hirte was concerned that all the money will not be there. She indicated as a voter, ambiguous language will cause people not to vote for the article.

Robin Corbeil, 4 Nesmith Court, asked if the \$700,000 will be in the article.

Mrs. Harrison commented we have to gross appropriate for the full amount with the offsetting revenues.

Ralph Boehm, 6 Gibson Drive, commented based on what he has heard, the article should be left as it was proposed.

Mr. Spencer commented that it is a typical boiler plate statement in the article. He asked that the amendment be approved.

*The amendment to Warrant Article 2 passed by voice vote.*

Olga (last name inaudible), 3 Perry Court, asked if the article can be amended to reflect both amounts, guaranteed amount and anticipated amounts.

Mr. Bourque commented that we are splitting hairs. He indicated those numbers can change.

Olga (last name inaudible) asked if the language can be amended to say "...to be offset by X in impact fees and a minimum of X dollars...".

Mrs. Couture commented that this is over-thinking. She explained that warrant articles have a certain language and this is usually how they are written. She indicated if people want more information they can request the information.

Mr. Boehm clarified that the state guidelines for 1,000 sf per kindergarten classroom was according to state building aid which no longer exists. He agreed with the social aspects and needs. He mentioned there is a bill at the state level that incorporates socialization in kindergarten.

Mrs. Harrison mentioned there is an amendment to a bill in committee to bring adequacy for full day kindergarten to the same amount as is funded for full time students.

Nicole Fordi, 85 Page Road, commented earlier in the presentation the breaking point for children to get caught up was mentioned. She indicated that if it is done the first time there is no need to catch up. She noted she is in support of full day kindergarten.

Janine Anctil, 42 Tanager Way, commented to those who think a half day program is fine, it does not mean that program is meeting needs of the students. She indicated they need to have the support of a full day program, teachers, instruction, etc. and have equal opportunity to get what they need.

Darcy Donahue, Litchfield resident, expressed appreciation for the presentation. She commented there is much discussion about declining enrollment. She indicated with the expansion of kindergarten and the resources, it is a great opportunity for families to move to our town. She noted there is real value to continue to support schools even though students are out of the system.

Mrs. Harrison mentioned last year we had to add another second grade classroom due to high enrollment in grade 1 the previous year. She indicated that 58 children are registered for kindergarten, with the majority choosing the full day program. She noted currently there are 52 in the half day program running this year.

Mr. Boehm commented that children need to be up to grade level by grade 3 as that is when they are assessed by the state (state testing).

Community Member commented it is a great way to give the children the learning they need early on and keep the smaller student/teacher ratios.

William Spencer, 9 Cranberry Lane, called the question.

Hearing no further amendments or discussion, Mr. Regan indicated that **Article 2 will appear on the ballot as amended.**

Mr. Regan read Article 3 and indicated Mr. Barka would speak to the article.

### **ARTICLE 3**

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety-Three Thousand, Three Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$93,313) to hire a full time Special Services Coordinator to support the Special Services Director and Special Services Department? If approved, this appropriation will be included in the operating budget for subsequent years.*

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.10 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 4-0-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-0-0.*

Mr. Barka provided the following information:

- The Special Services department oversees special education, 504 plans, English language learners, homeless, and home schooled children.
- Over 430 students are serviced.
- Adequate oversight and supervision of staff and programming is critical.
- There are 84 staff members and one person overseeing all of this.

Mr. Barka commented that one person cannot oversee the needs of 430 students and 84 staff members. He indicated the Special Services Coordinator would focus on CHS and out of district placements, allowing the Director and Administration to focus on GMS and LMS needs.

Hearing no amendments or further discussion, Mr. Regan indicated that **Article 3 will appear on the ballot as written.**

Mr. Regan read Article 4 and indicated Mr. Bourque would speak to the article.

### **ARTICLE 4**

*Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate up to Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund established in 2004 with this sum to come from the June 30 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1 of this year?*

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*This Article has a tax impact of \$0.00 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 4-0-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-0-0.*

Mr. Bourque commented this fund is to be utilized in the event of a major failure. He indicated there is approximately \$154,000 in the fund currently. He noted the School Board would like to add \$50,000 to the fund as there are also some priority repairs that resulted from the District-wide Buildings Assessment.

Hearing no amendments or further discussion, Mr. Regan indicated that **Article 4 will appear on the ballot as written.**

On behalf of the School Board, Mr. Bourque recognized two Board members: John York and Derek Barka. He thanked both Mr. York and Mr. Barka for their long service.

Phil Reed, 7 Forest Lane, made an observation on the special education process. He commented that he came from a family of five sons. The eldest was a genius. The third in line developed cerebral meningitis in the 1940s there was nothing available to the family to pay for special education for him. Families that were lucky enough could send their child to get services, but there was no public health then. Mr. Reed indicated he had the privilege of sitting on a council for a private company for 15 years that provides services for people with developmental needs. He noted he is happy to see how far we have come.

The Moderator thanked all who attended and accepted a motion to adjourn at 12:00 p.m. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A true record of the Litchfield School District Deliberative Session,  
Prepared by:

Michele E. Flynn  
Administrative Assistant to the Litchfield School Board



A true record of the  
Litchfield School District Deliberative Session

Attest:



Lynn Baddeley  
School District Clerk

Submitted: February 13, 2017

