

Our mission is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that challenge and engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. (2007)



LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

B. Bourque, Chair

C. Harrison, Vice Chair

**Approved Minute of the Public Hearing
held on September 2, 2020**

Location: Town Hall

In Attendance:

- B Bourque, Chair
- C Harrison, Vice Chair
- E MacDonald, Board Member
- R Meyers, Board Member
- T Hershberger, Board Member
- Dr. Michael Jette, Superintendent
- Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator
- Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

I. PUBLIC HEARING: RSA 197:3-a, III

6:00 p.m.

The governing body's warrant shall specify, in one or more articles, the amounts of appropriations proposed for reduction, rescission, or increase from the operating budget or separate warrant articles, or both, adopted at the annual meeting.

RSA 197:3-a - Special Meeting for Change in Education Funding

In response to statutory changes resulting in reductions or increases in distribution of state revenues for education pursuant to RSA 198:41 to school districts which would take effect after the adoption of a new school district budget and would apply in the fiscal year covered by the new budget, the governing body of a school district may, after consultation with the budget committee, call a special meeting of the legislative body to consider a reduction, rescission, or increase of appropriations made at an annual meeting.

Mr. Bourque opened the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

- **Superintendent's Report**
 - **School District Response to Statutory Changes**

Warrant Article 1 to appropriate additional revenue up to \$670,000 from the State of New Hampshire Department of Education, to add to the Capital Improvement Expendable Trust Fund.

Dr. Jette explained the Special District Meeting will be held on September 16, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the CHS Gymnasium and face masks are required to be worn. He indicated that this meeting is being held according to RSA 197:3 regarding special meetings in response to statutory changes that result in increases or decreases in distribution of state revenues for education.

Dr. Jette explained that the current NH state budget allocates an additional \$62.5M in targeted appropriations to districts as "fiscal disparity aid". One time funds are set to deploy in FY21. He noted these funds were not appropriated in March 2020 and voter approval is needed to transfer the funds to the Capital Improvement Expendable Trust Fund that was established and approved by the voters in March 2020. The School Board and School District consulted with the Budget Committee on August 27 in accordance and compliance with RSA 197:3a. The district has future projects that the funding will be used toward, such as Ventilation updates that total \$2.65M; GMS Planning \$320,000; LMS Kitchen \$300,000; CHS Gym Bleachers \$206,000. Current projects the district has either completed or are implementing include ventilation repairs (\$125,000); LMS canopy (\$220,000); GMS electrical repair (\$60,000).

Dr. Jette emphasized that this funding is critical to helping upgrade the repairs that need to be made going forward. He noted if the article does not pass, the one time revenue will go into the general fund and result in an

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unassigned fund balance, which will be used to offset the taxes. He noted that Litchfield State Representatives informed the public these were one time funds and that it was earmarked for infrastructure.

Dr. Jette further explained because of COVID 19 cost savings last year, the majority of the school district unassigned fund balance was returned to taxpayers and has offset taxes this year. He noted if this funding is returned to taxpayers it will result in an artificial dip that will cause a spike in the tax rate the following year. He reported that he and Mr. Izbicki have sat in on multiple meetings regarding ventilation in the district, during which was discovered the CHS system was never balanced in the past and valves are not functioning because of outdated controls.

The meeting on September 16 will be in the CHS gymnasium and voters are required to vote in person.

- **Board Comments**

Mr. Bourque read the warrant article:

Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to \$667,000 to the Capital Improvement Expendable Trust Fund previously established on March 10, 2020? This sum to be offset by a one-time grant of “fiscal disparity” funds in the amount of up to \$667,000 as part of the State of New Hampshire’s adequacy aid to the District. No amount to be raised by additional taxation.
(Majority Vote Required)

- **Community Comments**

There was no public input.

- **Board Action**

Mrs. Harrison made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 1 as written. Mrs. MacDonald seconded. The motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Bourque, yes; Mrs. Harrison, yes; Mrs. MacDonald, yes; Mr. Meyers, yes; Mrs. Hershberger, yes.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing was closed at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board