

**LITCHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DELIBERATIVE SESSION  
February 7, 2015  
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; Mr. Derek Barka, Vice Chair; Mr. John York, Mrs. Janine Lepore, Mrs. Mary Prindle.

Dr. Brian Cochrane, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frank Markiewicz, Business Administrator; Mr. Jason Guerrette, School District Clerk; Gordon Graham, Attorney for the District.

Mr. Tom Lecklider Litchfield Middle School Principal; Mr. Scott Thompson, Griffin Memorial School Principal; Mrs Laurie Rothhaus, Principal, Campbell High School.

Budget Committee members: Mrs. Cynthia Couture, Chair; Mr. Andrew Cutter, Vice Chair; Mr. Ray Peeples; Mr. Chris Pascucci; Mr. William Spencer; Mrs. Keri Douglas, Mr. Frank Byron (Selectmen's Representative).

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 10, 2015 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.*

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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:***

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

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 Ms. 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 herein, totaling Twenty-One Million, Thirty-One Thousand, Six Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$21,031,613)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Twenty-One Million, Seventy-Six Thousand, Twenty-Three Dollars (\$21,076,023) 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 \$0.91 and was not recommended by the School Board by a vote of 0-5-0. The Article was recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-2-1.*

Ms. Couture Discussed the Proposed Operating Budget and the rationale and methodology of their work. She discussed how the Budget Committee met with the district administration to understand their priorities for the coming year. Budget Committee members toured the facilities and asked a number of questions. The Budget Committee's presentation is attached. The proposed budget represents a 91 cent tax increase. If the default budget were to pass, it would represent an additional 5 cents for a total of 96 cents to the tax rate. The School Board had presented a budget that would have increased the tax rate by almost 2 dollars. The Budget Committee left approximately \$423,000 to fund the districts expressed priorities. Ms. Couture listed the areas the Budget Committee looked to make reductions in areas of historical underspend. The district failed to provide backup data for the need for air duct cleaning consequently; it did not make the proposed budget. The budget committee felt the reduction of one bus route was warranted. There was support for increases in Buildings and Grounds. If all



warrant articles pass an average Litchfield home would see an increase of \$1.20 in the tax rate or \$500 annually.

Ralph Boehm 6 Gibson Drive asked what the decrease in school population will be for the coming year.

Cindy. Couture – Currently 1307 students with a projection of 1267 students.

Steven Lowen - 7 Sugar Hill Lane – Can you explain the decline in revenues?

Frank Markiewicz – Decrease Similar to this year. The differences are \$800,000 in the unreserved fund balance of and in underspend of operating budget. There is also a slight decrease in adequacy aid.

Claudette Durocher, 158 Charles Bancroft Highway – What are the adjustments to the default budget?

Frank Markiewicz – Not sure I understand the question. Do you want to know all of the adjustments made to the default budget? Administration provides recommendation to School Board. Basically look at contractual obligations, under agreement with union. All salary increases are included and benefits. All contracted obligations are included in the recommendation to the Board. One time expenditures fall in to here; textbooks, computers, and furniture replacement from previous are not rolled up into the default budget. Transportation is also required. There is a substantial increase approximately a 5% increase across the board in the second year of the agreement.

John Latsha 10 McElwain Drive – My comments are for the Budget Committee, it appears that there is an increase in every line due to increased costs and there is the half million dollar bond payoff is absorbed in there so its actually a million dollar increase. Second issue is the ductwork cleaning. You were waiting on an estimate, wondering if district has received that estimate? Is it accurate?

Brian Bourque – We never received a written estimate, only a verbal.

John Latsha – How much was it?

Brian Bourque – 60 some-odd thousand dollars.

John Latsha – From what I understand it has never been done.

Brian Bourque – That is correct.

John Latsha – I'd like to make an amendment to do that but without a written estimate I can't do that without an exact number. It would not be appropriate.

Shana Dodge, 10 Herron Drive, - You say that the salary reduction was based on policy. Wondering if you could explain that?

Cindy Couture – Clarified what the question was. School District, I was on the board at the time, developed a policy. Ms. Couture read the School Board policy on student teacher ratio. Policy IHB Class size. She continued to say that a grid was developed to better understand the ratio and help make decisions based on the student enrollment.

Shana Dodge – I think there is confusion because of the exact numbers in this year's third grade.

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Cindy Couture – The budget committee uses projections. It is not the current enrollment. It is the projections that are used every year. It is projected that there will be 96 students in that upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Shana Dodge – There are currently 99 in that grade.

Derek Barka – We started the year with 96 third grade students and have added three. On the whole the district has added 6 students at GMS and 3 at LMS. Overall enrollments are going down because classes graduating high school are larger classes. Incoming grades are at about 100 students. The School Board is concerned but the third grade cut understandable but the 4<sup>th</sup> grade will continue to be concerning.

Cindy Couture – This is a scenario that has been played out often over the years. We do not know until the summer what the actual numbers will be. It is perfectly within the right of the School Board to add staffing based on what the enrollment will actually be. The budget is just a dollar guideline. It does not mean that they cannot keep a teacher if they need to. We have used these guidelines for years.

Derek Barka – Ms. Couture is absolutely correct. If this was one teacher that we would have to absorb, perhaps, however we may have to add another first grade teacher this year. If we look historically, Kindergarten students have added a large number over the summer. Mr. Barka gave examples of enrollment numbers from Kindergarten to first grade for the past several years. If we gain 8 more students over the summer, the district would have to add a teacher. Finding teachers is difficult. Finding more than one is that much harder.

Brian Bourque – Mr. Barka is correct. It is a bottom line budget. We could probably find the money for a fourth grade teacher. The School Board would do what is right and best for the students, but keep in mind that money comes from somewhere. It may come from textbooks, supplies, maintenance, or other personnel. It has to come from somewhere. What was presented was what the School Board and administration believes it needs to operate the schools to the best of their abilities. So, yes we can add a fourth grade teacher, but it will come from somewhere. Where that is, who knows.

Bill Spencer – To follow up, looking back over the budgets year after year after year, it has been under spent. From anywhere of \$200,000 to \$300,000 easily. Not because they have had to cut back, but because they money was there and not needed. I have no reason to believe that the budget being presented to doesn't have that same amount of surplus in it.

Robin Corbeil – 4 Nesmith Court – looking at line 114 looks like a \$140,000 increase for para's and monitors. That seems large to me.

Cindy Couture – It could be IEP driven and is based on the population of the school.

Brian Bourque - Para's were all IEP driven

Derek Barka – 8 Simeon Lane – Making a motion to add \$80,000 salaries and benefits for the purposes of funding a teacher at GMS. (Modified after written submission to Motion to add \$80,000 to bottom line by moderator as a specific purpose if not allowed) This would change the proposed budget to \$21,111,613.

Mary Prindle 26 Deerwood Drive– Second the motion.

Cindy Couture – Budget Committee reduction was for \$55,000 not \$80,000. Budget Committee believes funding exists in budget, i.e. computers were generously funded. The reason was



because the budget contained a lease/purchase for far less, but the budget committee felt funding for outright purchase was better option, adding an additional \$20,000 to do so. That does not prevent the district from proceeding with lease/purchase, thereby using the saving to fund an additional teacher if it decided to.

John Regan – Clarified that the bottom line number of the motion to be \$21,111,613.

Ralph Boehm – Can we get an idea of what Mr. Spencer was talking about and how much was underspent historically?

Bill Spencer – I don't have the exact figures with me, but it has been underspent every year. Last year some was attributable to revenue side of the equation. When I say \$200,000 that's been what it's been running.

Ralph Boehm – When I was on the School Board that is pretty much what it had been too. I think there is plenty of money in the budget if necessary. I said, "If" and we have always said we do not budget for "ifs"

Derek Barka – There was \$832,000 left over last year but largely due to revenues. There was a large refund from the LGA for insurance. The rest of the fund balance was from SPED dollars. When we budget for SPED it is a worst case scenario because you never know. School Board commits that if there is left over money in SPED it will be returned to the tax payer to offset next year's budget. We do always have roughly \$200-300,000 left over that is returned.

Mary Prindle – Speaking as a citizen added support to this motion. Our most important investment in our community is our teachers. We have policies. We make decisions based on projection not real students. We have real children in our schools and increased expenses and although this is a bottom line budget I support adding \$80,000 to invest in our teachers next year.

Cindy Couture – Someone asked about the history of unspent fund balance. 2011 had over \$370,000, 2012 had \$772,000, 2013 had \$392,000 and 2014 had \$367,000 of monies left over for an average of \$475,000 of monies the taxpayer over paid.

Sally Lowen - 7 Sugar Hill Lane – I would like to know the ration of teachers to administrators... How many administrators do we have?

Derek Barka – We don't really know. Let's see... (Mr. Barka attempts to list them from memory) No total exactly given.

Susan Seabrook – 33 Jamesway Drive – A point of clarification, the principal is half time at GMS.

Derek Barka – 119 teachers, 10 -12 administrators and a large number of paraprofessionals. Oh, and there is also other office staff.

Leanne Romano – 7 Country Lane – Supporting the motion and wanting to motion. Can we wait to do parking lot maintenance? I saw an increase in SPED. Does that not also put an additional burden on the teachers? We only have 23 in classroom but some may need extra help and that burdens teachers.

Chris Pascucci – If this motion passes it does not fund a fourth grade teacher. It adds to the bottom line. The school Board could decide to hire a teacher or not. Just like if it stays the way it is, they could hire a teacher or not. I believe they will do the right thing and if a fourth grade teacher is needed, they will hire one. I believe there is enough money in the budget. The bigger picture, no doubt this amendment could pass in this room, but the final say will be at the ballot

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box in March. Historically, voters have and may pick lower number. School Board has not recommended this budget, and their reason was for more money which is the default budget. If this passes this changes the totals causing the proposed budget to have the higher dollar amount. Also the Budget Committee would have the right to revote their recommendation if the number changes. I have no idea how that would go. But you do have the right to change it. It is up to you. Please consider all options.

Leanne Romano – Is there another way to word that? (The article) So that other people who do not have children in the schools might not see that the \$80,000 is in there.

John Regan – No

Keri Douglass – The budget has enough money in it. When looking at budget, the schools said because of declining enrollments there were looking at a 5 year plan to consider staffing. With declining enrollments we are not seeing lower administrative staff levels. We have 3 schools with fewer than 500 students. Rule of thumb has been an assistant principal for every 500 students. We could look at combining or splitting time. Possible \$100,000 is saving to provide funding for additional teachers. Looking at a decrease (enrollment) in town, we need to ask what we can afford. Don't wait five years. More than enough money if we truly need the teacher.

Leanne Romano – Can I propose the Schools revisit their budget?

John Regan – We are discussing the proposed amendment. That can be the next topic if you would like?

Brian Bourque – I believe Ms. Couture said the amount of money that was withdrawn was \$55,000. That did not include benefits. So the \$80,000 proposed addition includes benefits. The total removed by the budget committee for two teachers was \$174,675 if Mr. Barka's numbers are correct.

Sherry Fay – 10 Laurel Street – Projected numbers of third graders going to fourth grade? Is there currently 100 students going to fourth grade?

Cindy Couture – 99

Sherry Fay – So if there are 99 students and possibly one moving in, would that not put about 25 students per class? Not 22 or 23? As many as 25 in September?

Brian Bourque – Not sure what your question is but there are currently 99 students in third grade. The projection is for 96 students.

Sherry Fay – And give or take some move in students could be 25 per class in a fourth grade classroom? 4 teachers? I support Derek Barka's motion for adding \$80,000. I am a 17 year third grade teacher. I fully support that. There is no textbook, no computer, no playground equipment or colored pencil that can replace a student/teacher relationship. It is imperative that relationship exists and there is time in a day for that to offer them support to succeed.

Cindy Couture – That represents the Budget Committee sentiment. I want to remind you what the budget committee does. These are dollars and we use formulas to determine dollars. The school Board should in the summer, if they find they need staff, should provide one as they see fit. There are enough dollars to do that. We reduced dollars, not positions. It is within their right to do what is right for the students.

Janine Lepore – 17 Greenwich Road – Speaking as a citizen. I support the motion. There has been a lot of discussion of bottom line budget, this school board can find money if it wishes to, but I would like to

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comment on the fact that the money in there is already allocated. Can it be shifted if necessary, and then it comes from something else that is in greater need. We need every dollar in the budget. I think looking backward is what the budget committee does, they look at historical things and that is like driving a car straight forward but looking in the rear view mirror. This is a town we would like to maintain and even improve the wonderful school system, the wonderful teachers. If we take a teacher away the class size may be less now but then in the future have to ramp back up. What does that do to the quality of the teachers? Having to hire someone else to replace them in a few years where class sizes may increase. This back and forth is misguided. In a wonderful school with wonderful teachers we need to maintain. Everyone should consider the additional money. Let's keep the teachers we have. Remember that every single bit of money is allocated. It isn't as spongeable as the budget committee thinks it is.

Bill Spencer – Budget is made up of what the administration thinks it needs. What everyone thinks they need. Typically and I have done it in the past, you ask for what you think you need, but maybe a little bit more because everyone has a situation. When you put it all together the plus and minus result in not necessarily needing all that money. That is a fact. Money is allocated initially, and last year we had a default budget. The administration sat down with a default number and allocated it where they saw fit. They had what they felt they needed and still we ended up under spending the budget. There is absolutely no reason that will not happen this year or next year. That's the name of the game, the way it works. If you want to add this money in, it increases the bottom line, but as Mr. Pascucci said will bring it over the default number and I guarantee we will run on default again next year, no question in my mind about it... We don't really have to add this money to the budget to accommodate what you want.

Dennis Miller – 37 Wren St. To Mr. Spencer's point, we are in a default budget this year. I would like to know how many positions were added this year since March this past year.

Brian Bourque – 2 to 3 positions (para's) at about \$25,000 each

Chris Pascucci – 12 Colonial Drive – I was watching the School Board meeting a few meetings ago. Did I hear correctly the administration discussing the current year budget that they are projecting a \$200,000 underspend this year and heard the terms that the district was in good shape? Those exact words, financially.

Cindy Couture – I have a financial report dated January 20<sup>th</sup> it says salaries report to mid year is about \$300,000 underspent.

Chris Pascucci – Last years the district had less money then they asked for. They did a goof job reprioritizing things and there will be money left over. Even if everyone says not on the ballot, there will still be \$500-600 more in taxes. This conversation should be happening at the School Board level about where they should spend and allocate their money. I believe there to be enough money in there. I want people to think forward. Are the voters going to vote for the lesser of two dollar accounts? If that is the case what are we really getting by adding this \$80,000 in there? One last point, a few years ago there was a mistake in the default budget and a change was made at the last minute. Although right now the default budget is higher than the proposed, the default could be changed by tens of thousands at the last minute if it was deemed a mistake like it was before. Just recently a mistake was made where they removed tens of thousands. We could really be hurting ourselves.

Keri Douglass – We keep hearing the word “need”. We need this, we need that, and we need everything that is in the budget. If I truly believed that every line item was needed, believe me I would fight for it. I don't. I don't believe we need \$30,000 for a smart board that should be provided by the PTO. Our schools are amazing. The argument made was that we need them

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because we could do better. Where does that line stop? Shall we hire private tutors? Do we need several thousand dollar sports sheds? If sports wants them, why can't they raise the money? Do we truly need every dollar in there or are we using a different definition of the word need. Because to me, there is enough money in there to meet our needs and plenty to cover some of our wants.

Dennis Miller – So there were two or three Para's identified but none pending for next year?

Brian Bourque – That is correct. I wanted to clarify a point about smart boards provided by the PTO. They have only provided one.

Betty Vaughn – 10 Stark Lane – I want to play devil's advocate here, one the one hand we say we are under spending by \$200-300,000 per year one the other hand if you watch the school board meetings you will see that every year they are not helping the grounds situation, its like there is a whole list of things we are not doing because we are never funded adequately, so yes you could say it may be because they do not have rom in the budget to help building and grounds because we do not have the money to do it. So, I mean, I think, that if the board who are the people we voted for, the experts, that we need a teacher, you know we could listen to them.

Ray Peeples – 205 Charles Bankroft HWY – What drives the budget. We are right now being driven by the emotion over a teacher. We ask the school board not to drive it that way. We ask to approach from the view as dollars and sense. I ask you out there to take a look at the detailed budget, not the roll up, the line item budget and look at it. Here is two pages, just two where, two new storage sheds, replace existing storage shed, replace wood ramp, when you get down on these two pages, there is \$12,500 of wants and maybe \$2,000 of need. These are increases in services because they don't want to put their stuff at the sports field. There is enough money to fund this teacher. I don't care what anybody says, the budget committee can clearly see this. I urge to vote on facts not emotions. That is what we used to get here.

John Regan – Remember, we are not adding dollars for a teacher, we are adding dollars to the budget.

Robin Corbeil – I appreciate input and time of the Budget Committee but you didn't cut all of those other things, you cut a teacher. If other things came up for discussion maybe it would be different, but I rely on you to go through that budget because I don't have time, I am busy teaching your kids. You should pick the things that really need to be cut out and don't cut a teacher. That is why we are talking about a teacher. We aren't talking about sheds, or technology. You did not cut those. If those had been cut it would be an easier discussion. But we trusted you to make cuts and now this is the result.

Cindy Couture – We are following a formula in use for the last ten years. We are not cutting a teacher, its looking at dollars.

John Regan – Am I correct, you did not cut a teacher, you recommended a budget the district to work in? They now have to either build a shed or cut a teacher.

Robin Corbeil – Wasn't it from a salary line?

Cindy Couture – It took a salary average out of thin air.

Robin Corbeil – We cut it from a salary line not a maintenance line or technology line and that's why the discussion is about salary and not maintenance or technology.

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Chris Pascucci – I would like to add that after the budget hearing, talk to add the money back was discussed anticipating this reaction I asked the money be added back to this line and removed from the bottom line. I was put in my place by other members saying I was insulting the voter. Because you all know its bottom line and you can see there is not difference. We could have added it back in and remove it elsewhere but that would have meant nothing. Because it's a bottom line budget. Go to the next school board meeting after the next budget is approved and tell them exactly where you would like them to spend the money. Tell them we want a teacher, not a door, not a shed or not anything else you want to cut, but not a teacher.

Mary Prindle – Mr. Moderator, I would like to call the question  
Seconded. Motion passes.

John Regan – Vote on the amendment to Article 1 to add \$80,000 to the bottom line. I have a request for a secret ballot. We will use blue sheets number 11.

Leanne Romano- I have a quick question as I have to leave, a question for the school board only. Because the budget committee made their bottom line, can I amend article 1?

John Regan – We can discuss that after we vote on this amendment.

Leanne Romano – I have to go is there any other way?

John Regan – No. We will use #11 on the blue sheet. Please mark the ballot and it will be collected. We have a count for the amendment to add \$80,000 to the bottom line. 25 yes, 28 no. The amendment fails. We are back to the Article as written. Further discussion on Article 1?

Jason Guerrette- 11 Perry Court. I have a couple questions on the default budget calculation. I noticed this year's default budget included increase in adult education line, a self funded line. That isn't contractual. I believe a mistake. An increase in the tech plan of about \$6700, an increase in vocation tuition of about \$6200, there is a multi year increase in a curriculum plan of \$44,000 written up as a school board approved plan which is not a voter approved plan because we are currently under a default.. Grand total about \$180,000 in the default budget that I believe should not be there. We all agreed a few years ago that because of mistakes made in the default budget that the board discovered at the last minute and the board attorney Mr. Graham agreed to as mistakes, went back and redid the calculation. The board the agreed to always send the default budget to the school attorney to ensure they had not mistakenly calculation the default budget. I know they did not do that this year as I asked him directly and he said he had not seen it. My question is if we could please have an explanation as to how those items I mentioned fit within the law on default budget as they are neither mandated by law nor contractual.

Frank Markiewicz – I didn't list the specifics of what you were asking but in general terms, as you know the administration makes a recommendation to the school board as to what should be included in the default budget. The RSA is as you have mentioned in the past, talk about previous appropriation, there are contractual obligations the district must meet and contractual can be open to some interpretation as the school board has in past years they have taken the tech plan and considered it a contractual obligation as you know is approved by the school board as required by Department of Education and the boards has determined to take this forward to the default.

Jason Guerrette – While I understand what you are saying, I respectfully disagree. Every year there is a standing committee that puts forth a five year plan and I can remember year after year it not being able to be fully implemented because the voter did not approve of it in the proposed budget. So once we go to default, you are free to spend that money as you see fit or need to it does not become part of the default budget, it becomes part of proposed budget if you need additional funding. Any multi year plan or

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obligation can be approved by the legislative body, the voter, not the governing body (School Board) and its clear in the RSA's and am sure Mr. Graham could explain that. The school board cannot incur future obligation in a multi year plan without concurrence by the legislative body.

The next one is vocational tuition as I asked about this at the last board meeting. It was discussed that the vocation plan is projecting the number of students for a future school year that may or may not take those course. Today's number of students is 24 with a projection of 30. Again those numbers are fine for the proposed budget, but not for the default budget. It needs to be the same as last year. The next is the curriculum review cycle. I certainly understand the school board used to have a 7 year cycle where all curriculum is reviewed on a schedule. Not a default budget item as it calls for same level of appropriation. Until a proposed budget passes with increased levels of funding, then the default must remain the same as required by RSA. I would like to know if Frank believes that the school board has chosen to add this.

Frank Markiewicz – I make a recommendation for the school board to decide whether to include or not. I can't comment on what the school board believes.

John Regan – We are asking how the default was calculated. We can't change this here can we?

Jason Guerrette – Yes, it can be changed right after this meeting by the School Board upon discovering new information up to the time the ballot is printed.

Gordon Graham (School Board attorney) – What is the question?

Jason Guerrette – Mr. Graham, the question is the School Board has added \$6714 dollars to the tech plan which has never been approved by the voter or legislative body. \$6200 in vocation tuition increase, \$44,000 in a multi year curriculum plan, and also in the adult education program which they offer, I believe an \$18000 increase to the salary line.

Gordon Graham – Let me stop you there. I have not looked at the default budget. You know what the definition of the default budget is. It the operating budget last year, increased or decreased as the case may be by obligations that are mandated by law or contracts, and reduced and increased by items that are a one time expenditure or debt service. So you have those definitions. The school board takes a look at all of those. There are frequently multi year obligations, not obligations, multi year plans that involve both curriculum or technology that were approved by the State Dept. of Education that involve, so that those expenditures are not one time expenditure and they carry on and are not removed from the district budget. For example, you could argue that any kind of purchase, a computer one time, that you aren't ever going to purchase one again. Not so. Because the school board can say the want to develop a technology plan that they are required to and get it approved by the State, a five year plan that you know, that the money to fund that plan is not a one time expenditure and it not be reduced from the default budget. So it's a complex calculation as you know. In terms of the obligations to send students to the tech program, there are contracts to provide opportunities to students who want to avail themselves of career technical education and it's the districts obligation to make sure those students have an opportunity to participate in those programs in order to benefit from those programs. So those are all expenses that do not surprise me are included in the default budget. So, I did not review any of the documents, I do not have any details about the information, but hopefully that is an explanation.

Jason Guerrette – I do not disagree with your explanation except that we do need to provide opportunities, but those are in the proposed budget. The law tells us how to fund them under a default budget condition. The default budget requires a level of appropriation, not a level of service that then requires funding to maintain that level of service. This is about a dollar amount, not a service level. The default continues the exact same budget we are currently using. We

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returned hundreds of thousands of dollars this year proving there is enough money in the budget. This is not a level funded budget. Dollar for dollar is more in the default budget next year than is this year.

NH RSA 40:13

(b) "Default budget" as used in this subdivision means the amount of the same appropriations as contained in the operating budget authorized for the previous year, reduced and increased, as the case may be, by debt service, contracts, and other obligations previously incurred or mandated by law, and reduced by one-time expenditures contained in the operating budget. For the purposes of this paragraph, one-time expenditures shall be appropriations not likely to recur in the succeeding budget, as determined by the governing body, unless the provisions of RSA 40:14-b are adopted, of the local political subdivision

John Regan – Further discussion on article 1 as written?

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

Mr. Regan read Article 2 and indicated that Mr. Barka will speak to the article.

## **ARTICLE 2**

***Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Nine Thousand, Five Hundred Thirty-Six Dollars (\$79,536) for the purpose of funding salary and benefits for a full-time District Technology Database Administrator position to support the new Student Information System?***

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.10 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 5-0-0 and was recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 9-0-0.*

Derek Barka – This article is to hire a new database administrator. Two functions are to support the installation of a new Student Information System. Going to implement this system over two years. Second reason to support district 5 year tech plan. Existing staff has Director of technology. Server infrastructure. Also have an entry level IT guy. Does PC support, troubleshooting. We have a lot for two people to maintain and need to increase staff.

Ralph Boehm- Has anyone thought of making this a special warrant article so that the money can only be used for the specific purpose?

Cindy Couture – That would have had to be decided by the School Board.

Gordon Graham- Can't change it now.

Frank Byron – Under what law?

Gordon Graham – Under the law of warning, you can't change it too a special article at town meeting.

Ralph Boehm – I suggest in the future you make them special so they pass.

Dennis Miller – Is the language of the warrant article such that this person can only support the SIS?

Gordon Graham – No, it's not a special warrant article

Dennis Miller – So it isn't a limiting factor?

Gordon Graham – No

Dennis Miller – Did the School Board consider using a consultant for this perhaps the vendor we are using to provide this instead of adding another full time position?

Derek Barka – Implementation will take several months or so. Long term we want someone to mine data to make best use of the information.

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

Mr. Regan read Article 3 and indicated Mr. Bourque will speak to the article.

### **ARTICLE 3**

***Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000) to enhance exterior video capacity to include main entrance and perimeter of the building, new call box/system for visitors seeking entrance to the building during school hours, and exterior audio annunciators for emergency broadcast at Griffin Memorial School, Litchfield Middle School and Campbell High School?***

*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.10 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 5-0-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 9-0-0.*

Brian Bourque - Last year there was an approved warrant article to improve security. This included all locks, proximity card access and computerized control access center. This year looking to phase 2 will provide new cameras. These cameras would allow a full body image rather than just the face. More high tech and can record. Also perimeter outdoor cameras. Lastly an outdoor alarm system. See slides.

Susan Seabrook – Speaking as a citizen. Security is the utmost importance. Support this system.

Phil Reed – Unless you have been living in a shell, I don't care how much money it takes. Upgrade security. I urge we support this.

John Latsha- Who monitors people coming into schools now? One person? So if we add this additional security around the school will that one person be able to handle the extra work?



Brian Bourque – That person would still be just observing people coming in. We would the ability to.....This person will not be responsible for monitoring this equipment. The cameras are so we have a record after the fact.

John Latsha – If a person had a weapon outside the perimeter of the school, who could react to that on an immediate basis?

Frank Markiewicz – I can't comment on hypothetical security issues.

Bill Spencer – motion to close reconsideration of Article 1

Seconded – Passes on voice vote.

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 will speak to the article.

#### **ARTICLE 4**

***Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Seven Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty dollars (\$47,380) to reclaim and resurface the GMS paved playground area?***

*This Article has a tax impact of \$0.03 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 5-0-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 9-0-0.*

Brian Bourque- GMS parking lot is in rough shape. Been crack and sealed in the past few years and is in dire need to be rehabilitated.

See Slides

Phil Reed – Must be bad seeing a unanimous endorsement by the Budget Committee. Mr. Moderator have you scheduled time for announcements? Want take opportunity to congratulate Mr. Barka for selection as 40 under 40 in NH.

Shana Dodge – When was this last done and hearing there is a fence that may need to be ripped out.

Brian Bourque – Not sure when it was done last but there will be no issue with fence.

Susan Seabrook – Speaking as a citizen. Whenever playground is frozen this is the only place for children to play on. Many cracks, my job security but would like to see this repaved please support this.

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

John Regan – Now an opportunity for announcements

Brian Bourque – I would like to invite Dennis Miller Up. School Board and town want to thank Mr. Miller for his service on the School Board. Also would like to thank Ms. Prindle for jumping in and helping this year.

Cindy Couture – Would like to thank Andrew Cutter as he will not be running for his seat. I volunteer at the Red Cross. They will install smoke detectors free of charge, please see me for more information.

Mr. Regan read Article 5 and indicated that Mr. Bourque will speak to the article.

**ARTICLE 5**

***Shall the Litchfield School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Two Thousand, Eight Hundred dollars (\$22,800) for the purpose of funding the salary for a part-time (27.5 hours) Math Tutor at Griffin Memorial School?***

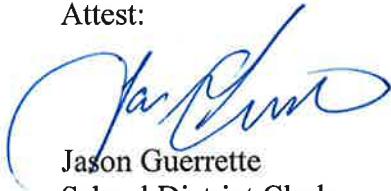
*This Article has an estimated tax impact of \$0.03 and was recommended by the School Board by a vote of 5-0-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0-0.*

We have a need for a math tutor at GMS for those non Title 1 kids that need additional help.

Hearing no amendments or further discussion, Mr. Regan indicated that **Article 5 will appear on the ballot as written.**

The Moderator thanked all who attended and accepted a motion to adjourn at 11:45 a.m. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A true record of the  
Litchfield School District Deliberative Session  
Attest:



Jason Guerrette  
School District Clerk

Submitted: February 24, 2015