

**TOWN OF LEBANON
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
May 4, 2009**

The Annual Town Meeting of the electors and citizens qualified to vote at town meetings of the Town of Lebanon, Connecticut, was held on Monday, May 4, 2009 in the Lyman Memorial High School Auditorium, 917 Exeter Road (Route 207) Lebanon, Connecticut. Audience: **167**

First Selectman Joyce R. Okonuk called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M..

First Selectman Okonuk then called for nominations for moderator.

Moved by Russell Blakeslee, seconded by Jan Van Woerkom, to nominate Edward Tollmann as moderator. Vote called - motion passed.

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom,, seconded by Phil Johnson to wave the reading of the warning of the meeting. Vote called - motion passed

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Linda Finelli to bring Item 1 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon naming the “Heritage Hymn,” words and music by Alberta Hawkins, as the official song for the Town of Lebanon”.*

Discussion:

Moderator Tollmann stated that the Lebanon Historical Society has requested that the “Heritage Hymn” be adopted as the official song for the Town of Lebanon. The song was written by Alberta Hawkins, who has given many long and unselfish hours to the town, for the Lebanon’s 300th anniversary celebration in 2000.

Mrs. Hawkins and members of the Community Chorus performed her song for those in attendance.

Moderator Tollmann called the question: Vote called – Item 1 passed
[a copy of the “Heritage Hymn” follows these minutes]

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom,, seconded by Phil Johnson to bring Item 2 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon the proposed 2009-10 Fiscal Year Budget for the Town of Lebanon in the amount of twenty-two million four hundred sixty three thousand nine hundred seventy five dollars and no cents (\$22,463,975.00) for the General Town Government, Board of Education, and Special Revenue Funds, with Revenue Estimates of eight million six hundred fifteen thousand nine hundred ninety one dollars and no cents (\$8,615,991.00) and the remainder to be raised by taxes, with an estimated mil rate of 21.1 mils, representing a 2.09% increase in the amount to be raised by taxes and to adjourn Item 2 to Referendum to be held, unless such date and times are altered by the Town Meeting, on Tuesday, May 12, 2009 between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. Electors and persons qualified to vote in town meetings who are not electors, shall vote at the Fire Safety Complex, 23 Goshen Hill Road, Lebanon, Connecticut.”*

Discussion:

Liz Charron, Chairman of the Board of Finance, gave a power point presentation of the proposed FY 09-10 budget. Charron explained that revenues are down \$400,980 over last year. During the Budget preparation process the Board of Finance took into great consideration that -- due to the revaluation and many assessment appeals --- we do not have a finalized Grand List, and that State funding is unknown. T. Allen Palmer, Chairman of the Board of Assessment Appeals stated that Board has held hearings on 165 assessment appeals and will have a final figure by May 29th. Tim Wentworth suggested that action on the budget be deferred until State funding is known. Bob Slate asked, that if this budget is approved, what procedure is in place to cut an approved budget if State funds are not forthcoming. Charron replied that at present, altering a budget after it has been approved is not allowed. However, a process to do so is being considered by State Legislature.

Moved by Bob Slate, seconded by Tim Wentworth to table action on the budget until the Grand List is perfected and the State budget is passed.

Bert Bosse stated that a motion to table is not debatable.

Tim Wentworth withdrew his second to the motion.

Jim Mello challenged the motion to table, stating that a motion to table must pass by a 2/3 majority vote.

Tim Wentworth again seconded the motion to table action on the budget.

Moderator Tollmann called the motion “to table action on the budget until the Grand List is perfected and the State budget is passed.”

A hand count vote was taken. 61 yes -89 no Motion to table failed

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Jason Huling to move item 1 to referendum. Vote called-motion passed [a copy of the proposed FY 09-10 Budget follows these minutes]

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Phil Johnson to bring Item 3 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon, if Item #2 is approved at Referendum, the proposed appropriation of up to eight hundred twenty four thousand three hundred sixty five dollars and no cents (\$824,365.00) to the Capital Reserve and Annual Capital Expense Fund of which up to one hundred eighteen thousand one hundred fifty four dollars and no cents (\$118,154.00) are to come from available unallocated or reallocated funds and the remainder to come from 2009-10 Fiscal Year budget appropriation.”*

Discussion:

Liz Charron, Chairman of the Board of Finance, explained Item # 3 , as proposed by the Board of Finance. Charron further stated that items to have monies spent on them will come to Town Meeting for approval. [Items can be viewed in the attached proposed Fiscal Year 2009-2010-budget]

Moderator Tollmann called the question. Vote called – Item 3 passed

Moved by Al Vertefeuille, seconded by Jan Van Woerkom to bring Item 4 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon approving the 2009-10 Fiscal Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as proposed by the Board of Selectmen.”*

Discussion:

First Selectman Joyce Okonuk explained the line items as listed in the proposed FY 2009-2010 Local Capitol Improvement Program (CIP), as proposed by the Board of Selectmen. Okonuk further noted that in order to apply for grants under the State of Connecticut CIP, the municipality must have an approved program in place.

Moderator Tollmann called the question. Vote called – Item 4 passed
[a copy of the FY 09-10 CIP follows these minutes]

Moved by Al Vertefeuille, seconded by Linda Finelli to bring Item 5 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon a new Ordinance Regarding the Approval of Capital Projects.”*

Discussion:

First Selectman Joyce Okonuk noted that Tim Wentworth proposed a similar ordinance at the 2008 Annual Town Meeting, and asked him to speak. Wentworth stated that capital projects have a large impact on tax dollars. By bringing these projects before the Annual Town Meeting for consideration and action, tax payers will be given the full impact of tax dollars being paid.

Moderator Tollmann called the question; Vote called – Item 5 passed
[a copy of the proposed Ordinance follows these minutes]

Moved by Jan Van Woerkom, seconded by Phil Johnson to bring Item 6 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon accepting and expending the Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Innovations Grant in the amount of four thousand dollars and no cents (\$4,000.00).”*

Discussion:

Kara Fishman, Chairman of the Energy Task Force Conservation Committee [ECC] stated that the ECC has been reviewing/evaluating the town’s energy usage. Fishman further stated that Lebanon is a clean energy community, and has pledged to cut electric costs by 10% by the year 2013. The proposed grant funds will be used by the ECC to continue their work.

Moderator Tollmann called the question. Vote called – Item 6 passed

Moved by Al Vertefeuille, seconded by Linda Finelli to bring Item 7 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon the discontinuance of certain town-funded street lights.”*

Discussion:

Selectman John Bendoraitis spoke as follows. In order to reduce the current yearly electric cost of \$12,000 for town funded street lights the Board of Selectmen are proposing the discontinuance of certain street lights. The proposed reduction should reduce the cost to approximately \$3,000 yearly. The Board will contact residents/property owners in the affected areas to see if they want to assume the cost of the lights that affect them.

Moderator Tollmann called the question. Vote called - Item 7 passed.
[a list of town funded street lights follows these minutes]

Moved by Al Vertefeuille, seconded by Bob Slate to bring Item 8 to the floor. *“Consider and act upon accepting and expending the fiscal year 2010 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) in the amount of two thousand seven hundred fifty dollars and no cents (\$2,750.00).”*

Discussion:

First Selectman Okonuk stated that the grant funds will be used by the Emergency Management Director for training and equipment

Moderator Tollmann called the question. Vote called – Item 8 passed

Moved by Bob Slate, seconded by Al Vertefeuille to bring Item 9 to the floor. *“Consider any other business proper to come before said meeting.”*

Bob Slate stated the annual budget should be split and suggested it be voted on at the municipal election on November of 2009.

Liz Charron stated that the Board of Finance looked at the possibility of splitting the budget, but felt due to unknown grand list changes and unknown state funding this was not the budget year to do so.

Jeff Sorrell stated that he understood the Board of Selectmen have approved an abatement for farms that would pass the cost onto all tax payers.

Selectman Okonuk explained that the Board of Selectmen has discussed a proposed Ordinance that would give a tax break to farm building. The Board approved the concept, but felt this was not the time to bring it forward.

Tim Slate stated that helping out agriculture in Lebanon is helping out the town.

Bill Lang stated that he would like to see quarterly property tax payments.

Oliver Manning stated that he would like to see any open space over a certain size taxed per its usage not its potential. T. Allen Palmer stated that an Ordinance would have to be in place to do so.

Keith Wentworth stated that he would like to see the budget voted on at the Annual Town Meeting.

Tom Conley and Keith Wentworth thanked Ed Tollmann for his dedication and expertise in conducting our Town Meetings.

Moved by Al Vertefeuille, *seconded by Bob Slate* to adjourn .

Vote called – motion passed Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Coutu
Town Clerk

Note: All attachments/copies as noted in the minutes are on file in the Town Clerks Office.
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ATTACHMENTS