The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, began at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Derek DeBarge, James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves, William Rosenblum and Manuel Silva.

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

VISITATIONS:

5:05 p.m. – Board of Assessors- Tax Classification Hearing

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to continue the Tax Classification Hearing on Friday, December 23, 2022, at 10 a.m., seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

5:10 p.m. – Various Department Heads to discuss Position Requests and Reclassifications

DPW/Steve Santos

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:31
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Strange: So, Steve has a meeting to go to, so we were hoping to get to him first.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay, Mr. Santos.

Mr. Santos: Good evening gentlemen.

Mr. Goncalves: Good evening.

Mr. Santos: In our quarterly meeting this was probably all discussed. What we have is five PW vacancies. We're looking to take three of those, unfund two PW3's and take a PW3 and move it to a PW4M. That will all be done within our budget. The only other thing we want to add to the PW4M and Derek this was discussion before, I think it was the time to do it, I think it is to add a tool stipend to that mechanics position.

Mr. Goncalves: Is that $2,500?

Mr. Santos: $2,500, but that is just going to go with the PW4 position. The difference between a 3 at the top rate and a 4 is about $96 per week. So, I don't think it's going to be that much where you are going to get a flood of mechanics coming in. So, I think the stipend and basically the stipend is what we would like it with the position, but just for tools not like a conventional stipend like the town has done in the past where once a year we give them a check for $2,500. We want to make sure it goes to tools, specifically tools.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman, maybe Marc, refresh my memory did we not vote for this at our joint meeting? I believe we approved it there.

Mr. Strange: I don't remember that there was a motion made.

Mr. Goncalves: I don't think there was a formal motion.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Goncalves: We all agreed that that made sense but,

Mr. Silva: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what exactly are we creating for positions?

Mr. Santos: We're going to take one of the 3's and make it a PW1, which is just a laborer. We're going to make another PW3 a PW2, which is a laborer/truck driver and then the other 3 we are going to boost it up to a 4.

Mr. Rosenblum: Mr. Chairman, so this is the exact same thing that we discussed last week. So, there's no change in your budget, it all stays within your budget?

Mr. Santos: Everything stays. We are actually, with all of those changes in the budget we will have a surplus of $4,575.

Mr. Goncalves: Good job. Including the $2,500 for the tools?

Mr. Santos: No, the $2,500 will come out of the operating budget.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, because you we're saying you're doing to take away the classification of the haulers in one of them you were going to remove hauling from one of them. I don't know, that's fine. I'm good with it. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Do you want to do a separate motion for the $2,500 and then just do the positions and then the stipend?

Mr. Goncalves: We can do it all in one shot.

Mr. Silva: Hold on I have a question. Just a question for Kim, are you all set with the way his budget is, do you know all of these things, all of these switches and the second part of my question does Human Resources do they know this and are they are they okay with everything? So, everything is good, it flows with our, okay.

Ms. Collins: The only thing that I don't have in the current budget projections would be the $2,500.

Mr. Silva: Right.

Ms. Collins: They've already requested the funding for the two PW3's but they want to use that funding if you approve these two positions.

Mr. Goncalves: But there's no funding because we're dropping some PW1's or we're taking a couple of PW3 to 1's and 2's.

Ms. Collins: They wouldn't be asking for additional funding at town meeting, they would rely on the funding that's currently,

Mr. Goncalves: And the positions would just stay vacant.

Talking over each other.

Ms. Collins: Yes.

Mr. Rosenblum: And the surplus would pay for the tool stipend.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10: 39
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Strange: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a question, and this might be for Carrie. So, essentially what the Board is doing tonight is adding these positions to the classification plan, is that right?

Ms. Ribeiro: Right.

Mr. Strange: So, right now in the DPW budget there are PW3 positions, right. So, we're not necessarily swapping them out, you guys are not swapping them out, you're adding them to the classification plan. So, then we can then add them to the budget. Because you can add a position to the classification plan but not fund it.

Mr. Goncalves: Right, we're not going to fund any additional positions. We're just making those positions available at whatever the pay is but there won't be enough money if you wanted to hire those two or three positions. There won't be salary in there under the current budget.

Mr. Santos: But they'll still be in the classification plan so next year if we want to finance those positions, they'll already be in the classification plan...

Talking over each other.

Mr. Gennette: So, we're approving the addition of these positions. We're not approving the conversion from a three to...

Mr. Goncalves: Correct.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to approve the Board of Public Works to have one PW1 position, one PW2 position and one PW4M position and approve a $2,500 tool stipend for the PW4 mechanic, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 8:33
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Fire Chief Pease

Chief Pease: Alright guys, this is much of the information that you saw last year, some of it's updated, know last year I came in with a plan to put four positions on the department in those five years and then another four after that, which would bring every crew up to ten in the next ten years. Last year I was given two positions, budget time it was cut back to one. So, right now I have three crews of 8 and one crew of 9 because you gave me that one position. So, we're trying to get every crew up to at least nine in the next five years. Up at the top of the page here that's colored, you'll see our call volume increase over the past 21 years and it shows 165% increase to our medical responses and 115% to our overall call volume and since 2000 we've seen, including the position that was given to us for this fiscal year, a 16% increase in staff and below that you'll just see some of the nearby communities and some other similar communities staffing of firefighters to citizens and below that is just the amount of time we've been below our minimum staffing which means that if we started our minimum which is six all three ambulances go out, there's nobody left in town unless people come back from home. Running our department like a call department this day and age is really number one just not cost efficient and two it's just not efficient at all because we cannot rely on people to come in from home all hours of the night and day. So, the more that we bring up our staffing, the less we have to call in people from home and eventually the less we will have to pay out in over time until we get full-time positions approved. Just to be quick in everyone's time here over here is our ambulance revenue, since FY16 you can see that there's been, over the past seven years, an increase of $618,375 in revenue over the past seven years. Just in the last year, we've seen a $263,276 increase in our ambulance revenue and the fact of the matter is that the more people I have at the station, the more we have the ability to staff all three ambulances that we have. If there's other calls going on, I mentioned last year a call where we had a water rescue going on and a structure fire at the same time where we didn't have any staff to respond to that structure fire had it not been for people coming in from home, grabbing an engine and being there, which beat our mutual aid companies there. We rely on a lot of other small towns and big cities for mutual aid, but the fact of the matter is they're coming from 10 or 15 minutes away by the time you make that call they're probably at least 20 minutes away. So, we really have to be self-reliant in it of ourselves and secondly if we have the staffing there it will also help revenue too, which I know we're not a revenue driven entity; we're a public service but to come full circle on it we're protecting the citizens, we're providing a service for them and we're generating revenue. So, again I'm asking for two positions this next year. I think we certainly have the justification for that, and it's been a long time coming. That will bring us up to, if we get these two positions, three shifts of nine, one shift of eight and of course I'll be back again to even them off. Do you have any questions?

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Chairman. Chief, do you have any empty positions right now?

Chief Pease: No, all of our positions are currently filled. I have one in the fire academy right now who of course by the time we get somebody trained they're at least eleven weeks in the academy, depending on the date it's probably half year before we get them back fully trained and then I have one attending the academy in January, but all of our positions that we have on the books are currently filled, which I'd say is a great feat in it of itself. If you talk to any of the area fire departments or any public safety departments, it's been tough to fill positions with qualified candidates and we have been very lucky in that respect, and I think that speaks a lot for our town and our department.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what do the actual two positions cost because I'm seeing your budget increase is about $250, am I doing the math correctly?

Chief Pease: There's nothing in the budget with the new positions there for this year,

Mr. Strange: Mr. Chairman there's a sheet...

Chief Pease: I can tell you right now too. A paramedic/firefighter is $71,143 for a single one.

Mr. Goncalves: $71,200 okay I see it here. Questions guys?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10: 39
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. DeBarge: I don't have any questions.

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Gennette, Mr. Rosenblum?

Mr. Gennette: I'm all set.

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Silva?

Mr. Silva: I'm a little confused quite honestly. We have all these requests before us, there's no way that I for one can say yes or no to anyone of these until we sit down and have our budget unless Kim has our budgets before us and some of these positions are in there and we know where we are with our levy limit and so on and so forth. So, to add this, add this and then have to go back and say this can't happen. So, my suggestion is we take these all in and then we'll sit down and move forward because before it was a little different, we had a budget subcommittee and we had all these requests, we went over them, we said this is not going to work, this is going to work so on and so forth. So, to be here and have everybody just come in with all these positions it's not possible that we can really, yes.

Mr. Strange: This is probably my fault for injecting a little bit of newness, which I'm sure shocks everybody. So, you can add the positions to the classification plan without adding them to the budget, right. So, if you all vote to add these to the classification plan it doesn't necessarily drop it into level 2, right. There's some discretion that Kim and I have for you know presenting the level II budget to you guys and to FinCom, but having said that, I think we do have a bottom line as to how far we're over right now. Doe that include the underlying assumptions for that level 2 that all these are awarded?

Ms. Collins: Yes, and I think typically I do kind of walk you through this before you start talking to everybody, but everybody was here waiting. So, and the other thing is to, we are doing this a lot earlier than we've done it in the years past. So, we don't have any numbers from the state. Currently, right now if you look at level 1, that is what the department's came in and requested before they came through with their new positions and reclassifications. We were about $800,000 over the levy.

Mr. Goncalves: That's the $794,000 number?

Ms. Collins: Yes, that's the $794,000 and then if you look to the right of it, I basically explained what everybody's requests; their level 1 requests were. For level 2 all of the new positions and reclassifications that have been requested that are on this page, those have been added to the level 2.

Mr. Goncalves: And it actually came down?

Ms. Collins: It did because the Town Administrator and I also went through and looked at some of these areas. If you look at page two off to the right it says level 2 adjustments,

Mr. Goncalves: Yes.

Ms. Collins: those are reductions to level two based on conversations with the departments and also for example it shows, capital vehicles, $100,000, was removed from the budget, but it was added to the five-year plan for capital for every year for the next five years. So, I'm not going to go through all of the detailed ones, you can look through those but basically the new positions that they're requesting and all of these reductions, we're now at negative $674, but also keep in mind it's very early and we don't have our state numbers, we did a 3% increase to local receipts. I've used all of the assumptions for overlay

and for growth that we've been seeing, trying to set the tax rate this week and there's no increase for, if rates get increased for ambulance or if rates get increased for any of the other fees in town.

Mr. Goncalves: I can tell you from the standpoint of the ambulance that that number is mind-boggling and just for people that are listening those 759 additional transports in a seven-year period, the increase; that's two more ambulances a day plus. Am I reading that correct, seven-year increase in transports?

Chief Pease: Yes, yes.

Mr. Goncalves: 759 additional,

Chief Pease: Those are just transports. Those aren't the calls for service where we didn't provide a transport, but those are the revenue generating calls. If you look at our other statistics, there on the other sheet I mean you can see the increase in volume over twenty years and the increase in our staffing levels and we struggled to keep up with everything.

Mr. Goncalves: Up 40% and by comparison to everyone that's around us, you guys are light. If I go to Hingham, which is the closest population, they have 56 full time.

Chief Pease: But I mean up top if you see our increase over time with medical responses and responses in general you know with the amount of people we are working with, we started with 31 in 2000 and we're up to 36 now in 2021 and we've seen an increase. We've seen our call volume more than double in that time.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 APR 20 A 8:33
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: Okay, questions?

Chief Pease: Like I said people are generally accustomed to an ambulance coming every time they call for help and you know we're trying to keep up with the demand, but we do struggle to keep up with it these days just to keep people in the station and don't forget the fire coverage that we provide for the town. All three ambulances are out, that's six guys and you do the math, there's not very many people left.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, it leaves you two or three for a fire.

Chief Pease: There's nobody sometimes depending on; our minimum is six.

Mr. DeBarge: Mr. Chairman. I know I've spoken a lot about needing to move forward with our town, staffing, salaries. We're so far behind in both of those. So, I know going into this I was a little more optimistic until I heard some news about the school department, which we're going to see later on, and all of that kind of tallies goes into the whole generating budget, but seeing the need and not being able to fund the need is probably our biggest problem right now. So, I see the need with all of our department heads here without the ability to fund every single request that we have. So, I cannot disagree with Manny in the fact that; it's tough for me to personally listen to all this and then just you know calculate a decision about what is greatest need and all of that without being able to fine tune the numbers, however, the good part about seeing the need to Marc's point is being able to at least put those positions in so that they're in the classifications so to speak and not fund them until we know that we can. I know that's where I'd be moving towards if people wanted decisions tonight for ones that I see that are necessary. We're meeting with the school committee to talk about a one point million-dollar overage after all of this, so you know I can't tell any department head right now yes. It's not that I don't agree you need it, but can we afford it because I can't answer that question, I know for me I can't. The need Chief, I see it we've done this with you a number of times, you provide the best information when it comes to all of that. Call volume, departments that are near us, it's hard for any of us and I'll speak for me, it's hard for anybody to say that to this isn't showing that we need to build the staff in your department. Funding it, again is a different story. So, I would move to approve those positions without funding so at least they're in the books and we know. I don't know how to do anything else or I don't know what would be responsible to do anything else.

Mr. Goncalves: Is that a motion Mr. DeBarge?

Mr. DeBarge: I'm just saying that I would move to do that, I'm not, it's not a motion.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman and again the question is for Human Resources, is that a viable thing to do to have, now let's say we're going to have ten positions that are unfunded in our plan. Is that something that works, doesn't work, is that advisable? Sorry to put you on the spot but.

Ms. Ribeiro: No, that's okay. I mean it certainly is doable. I don't love the idea to be honest with you. I don't like the idea of adding all of these positions without funding any of them. I think that gets messy to track you know.

Mr. Silva: Well certainly we're going to fund a few of them anyway, a couple of them. We're not saying, but to fund them all; we all know it's impossible. Our community is not going to be able to do it unless somebody wants to step up and write up an override and get out there and try and get an override in and I doubt that will happen.

Ms. Ribeiro: It's gets messy in the sense we just had this happen in another department where this Board approved a couple of positions back in 2019 and every year, we go are they funded or are they not funded. So, it does cause a little bit of confusion. You can do it, certainly. If we are going to do something like that, I would suggest maybe even having an addendum to the classification plan or un-fund positions if that's something we're going to do.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Chairman, I don't see why we can't all of these positions under advisement, talk about them as far as budgeting and approving the positions. Everybody is here to tell us what they need. Let's take all of those, put them in our and then re evaluate it as we're going through the budget process and approve the positions we can.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 APR 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: Approve them and fund them at the same time?

Mr. Gennette: Do the same thing, so take Chief's advisement for two positions?

Mr. Goncalves: They'll get the same amount of attention. It's probably just going to be cleaner from HR standpoint rather than say they're there or whatever. I think the message was well delivered and we appreciate what you guys do.

Mr. Rosenblum: Mr. Chairman, Kim do you have any input on that?

Ms. Collins: No, I would agree with Carrie in terms if you, because we have had positions that were approved and were unfunded and then the next year everybody just assumes well, I get to add my funding in because they approved my position last year. So, no matter what if you approve these, you put them in the classification plan and people will just assume next year I have the position, I get to fund it. Carrie is saying there should be an addendum where it says un-funded position, I think that would be a really good way to decipher between the two.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, because theoretically we can save everyone time and say we approve everyone's, but we don't know if you will get the money and then you wait three years before you even get that position funded.

Mr. Gennette: But I think that is what we are trying to avoid.

Mr. Rosenblum: Right but that's what I'm saying here is that...

Talking over each other.

Mr. Goncalves: Then what we'll do is we'll decide if we are going to do a subcategory unfunded or we're just going to approve them as we fund them. Maybe we will talk about it all at the same time when we get there. Sounds good. Thanks.

Chief Pease: We'll be back.

Mr. Goncalves: Thanks Chief.

Chief Pease: Thank you.

Chief Valadas/Detective Kornacki

Mr. Goncalves: Chief Valadas come on down.

Chief Valadas: Good evening, I presented to Mr. Strange my synopsis letter along with the two-personnel form request. We'll start with the sworn officers' positions. So, I'm requesting this year basically two positions but it' two separate budgets. So, the first position being a sworn position, being a police officer positions, which falls under the police department and the second one being a dispatch supervisor, which falls under the dispatch budget. To start with the police supervisors' position, in my previous two budgets I stressed importance of building a command staff when you're trying to build a department you start with a command staff. At least in police work you do and then you build downward. I mentioned to you before in previous talks that one differentiation if you will between the supervisor and a patrol officer is the face that supervisors don't leave. They're usually veteran officers with a certain amount of time. They establish their roots, their ties, their residency what not and it's very rare for a supervisor to transfer to another police department because they usually don't transfer their rank. You could have supervisors apply for a higher rank in another police department, which is happening now because everybody is so thin on police officers. But I'm asking this year specifically; my first year you granted me a Sergeant and I augmented my four to twelve shift patrol, my second shift patrol. Last year you granted me a Detective Lieutenant positions, it's a command level position. It's my third Lieutenant which means basically I have, most police departments follow the same schematic, it's not something that's relatively ingenious to us, it's administration, operations, investigations. Those are your three branches. Some departments have larger branches, but we don't need that. So, under those three, this specific position I'll do something that I haven't done before, which is I made a promise to Mr. Strange and to Ms. Collins before at the pre-meeting that the Ludlow Police Department will not need to add another supervisor for at least five years. This specific position allows us to, it's going to be Detective Sergeant, it allows me to grant me the position, I take it put it in patrol and I take a veteran Sergeant and move them into a second shift Detective bureau position. Basically, what they do, is we will have an operating unit on the second shift with a supervisor for accountability, evidence processing and whatnot. Management of the operations and management of people. I currently have, supposed to have two detectives on the second shift but we're short-handed right now. It's getting better; hopefully 2023 will be a better year. We have five in the five in the academy, we have four vacancies, which we can discuss as well but this position here would fall under the command of the detective bureau of Lieutenant Kornacki. He also assumed command of all SRO's, which currently we have one that will as soon as we get more officers will be assigned a second SRO. We'll have to look at that in the future. Hopefully, maybe this calendar year we'll get the second one back. At one point we had two SRO's but those have now been removed from the admin hierarchy if you will and put into command of Lieutenant Kornacki. He submitted a five-page narrative to you, which goes far more explanatory than my synopsis. So, in my thirty years I knew no one with police work that has the investigative breath that this gentleman does. So, I'm going to have Lieutenant Kornacki go over basically what this specifically, what this position would give the Town of Ludlow.

Lt. Kornacki: I wasn't prepared to speak tonight. I wrote out basically what the duties and responsibilities of the detective bureau in the Town of Ludlow consist of and they cover a wide range of activities not just limited to criminal investigations, we do background checks, we are part of the Sims program. We do outreach for drug overdoses. So, the all-encompassing responsibilities of detective bureau pretty much anything your patrol officer responds to then becomes the property of the detective bureau to conduct follow up investigation. So, in this time that we've been pretty much short-handed with officers it's been difficult for our patrol staff to manage. There's been a lot of overtime. Guys have been ordered to work, but another byproduct of that is our detective bureau has been depleted to myself and three detectives handling all the responsibilities. To be honest I don't know if you've all read the letter I sent to you, so it pretty much covered everything that we manage and handle. It's a 24/7 operation. We're getting calls 24/7.

Mr. Goncalves: Seven days or not yet?

Lt. Kornacki: What's that?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
LUDLOW, MA

Mr. Goncalves: Is it seven days a week?

Lt. Kornacki: Seven days a week.

Chief Valadas: So, four detectives, 24/7/365, that's very straining.

Lt. Kornacki: It's a growing responsibility. Like I said in the letter, I have been a Detective in this town since 1997. When I became a Detective, it was myself and one Sergeant and at the rate of growth of needs and work that is going on in that office has far exceeded the growth of officers we have there and to be completely frank everything suffers as a result of that. There are certainly aspects of school resource officer training and investigations that don't get all the attention that they deserve. It's my opinion through our school resource officer there's a lot of issues that can be nipped in the bud before they become a criminal issue. Our outreach programs that we're involved in I think address drug addiction in this community pretty well and you know in my career I've discovered there are multiple ways to address these drug issues through education, through intervention and investigation. Our investigation aspect has certainly suffered. We have a one-man detective unit. It's not really a safe way to conduct drug investigations. We're kind of holding things together with tape and doing the best that we can, and I think that as the Chief, and I have discussed the expansion of the detective bureau. We haven't hammered everything out completely, we have a good idea of how we...the detective bureau to handle investigations and outreach and specifically use this four to twelve Detective Sergeant to primarily conduct narcotic investigations and handle pharma's investigations, which is something that is kind of creeping into this community as well. We have people manufacturing guns that we're aware of in this community. We have a number of things that just frankly we didn't have in 1997 when I became a detective. So, I don't want to take up everybody's time but there's an absolute need to add another supervisor to the detective bureau simply because the variety of activity that is managed by the detective bureau is too much for one supervisor to manage effectively.

RECEIVED
APR 2 2023
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Chief Valadas: I want to add to that. So, I get asked all the time since I've been a police officer and especially since I've been any kind of a management or supervisor command role; what are you going to do about drugs in this town. So, I mentioned at the department head meeting that we had three federal raids this year. I mean we're taking kilos out of a house with firearms dealing with things that are absolutely...that happened twice by the way. So, you're talking about this is big time here. So, people ask me what are you going to do and I say one way to help people is you interdict, and you bring them into the system to get them into the courts and the sheriffs and what not to get them the programs. So, arrest is a mechanism for that, okay. Not only do you interdict the street sales and maybe like a moderate level of trafficking, but you interdict, you stop the process and maybe somebody maybe won't reciterate or somebody will get some help, but it's a way to do that. This position does that. This narcotics Sergeant Detective Sergeant is going to proactively curb a problem in the middle of something that we've been in for years and it's not getting any better. So, this to me as I said to you last year, the Detective Lieutenant was the most important position I've asked for, just under that he needs the help and I need this, Sergeant. So, as I told Mr. Strange, and I told Ms. Collins I'll withdraw $200,000 from my fiscal 24 request. Withdrawn. I need this.

Mr. Goncalves: Questions? How much of that other stuff is going to capital just out of curiosity Kim?

Mr. Strange: So, we already cut a bunch out of the police budget already for cruiser cams, body cameras and we took out the $100,000 for the cruiser and put it into the capital. We cut dispatch per diem budget, which hasn't been used to its fullest extent. So, we've cut a lot of the fat out of the police department already. Secondly, back in 2019 the police department was given by the Board two additional patrol officers. Patrol officer's number 31 and 32, which for some reason didn't make it to the classification plan. Those officers are on the current police budget. So, in effect those are budgetarily those are two new positions that were not previously funded. So, our thought is we could fund one of those this year and then maybe one next year considering even with all of the cuts we made to police and other departments we're still $674,000 over budget.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you.

Chief Valadas: In my tenure if this town wants to be service and you're asking those men and women to do what they do, we need 45 police officers. We've made our calls, we've looked at towns our size, go to Agawam they have ten detectives, we have four. We're not reaching things we should be reaching.

It's only a matter of time before something happens and we'll be really thin. So, we had three homicides from 2016 to 2018. A homicide is him working nonstop until you find them or get them. So, you know my good friends are Holyoke, Springfield, West Springfield they look at us and go hmm we've got a lot of your residents with plates over here in Ludlow. So, guess where our stuff is going?

Mr. Goncalves: Well, it's good it's happening out there anyways at least...

Chief Valadas: It's coming here.

Lt. Kornacki: It's coming here, it's coming back here, and I mean I hate to sit here and feel like I'm begging for something to make my life easier but I'm not. I don't think that this is going to make my job easier, it's going to make our services to the community better,

Mr. Goncalves: And it makes the town safer. I mean I've said it, you've heard me say it a million times I think the difference between us and some of the bridges that connect us to other towns are that safety complex, what happens there both from Chief Pease and you guys. It makes a big difference. So, anything we can do to better that, I'm in and you guys know that.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman just a question for Kim. So, between last year's police budget and what the level 2 budget is, we have the contractual services obviously in there and then we have this position that's requested? So, it's a $240,000 increase, is that what I'm looking at?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 APR 20 A 10: 31
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Collins: You're looking between the $4.3 million from 23 and the $4.58?

Mr. Silva: Right and the $4.58 yes, level 2.

Ms. Collins: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Okay.

Ms. Collins: So, that would include the cuts that were made for level 2. It would include the new position requests and,

Mr. Silva: And the contracts.

Ms. Collins: and the funding for one of those additional patrol 31 I think and any other contractual increases including Quinn bill.

Mr. Silva: Okay but this position that the chief is talking about is that the one position that we're putting in?

Ms. Collins: No.

Mr. Silva: This is an additional,

Mr. Goncalves: This would be additional.

Mr. Silva: okay, just wanted to be sure. That's all, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Chairman, personally if it was up to me, I would approve both of these positions. Both the dispatch supervisor and the Detective Sergeant, but we've agreed that we're going to take these positions under advisement.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, just to make sure we understand everything going on and if there's any additional questions.

Chief Valadas: I would like to explain the dispatch supervisor a bit. Chief Pease can also help me out with this. So, for those in public watching that don't know, basically we maintain our 911 dispatch is a two-station dispatch with the third council. We, my predecessor, brought in the capability of doing fire dispatch as well as EMD, which is emergency medical dispatch as well as our police and so it's police,

EMS and fire. It's a municipal, it's what the larger municipalities have. Your central dispatch is your command center if you will. All 911 calls, all emergency calls go there. We have nine full-time dispatchers, which is the bare minimum. So, to staff two dispatchers on every shift there has to be two people one in front of each...all the time. So, basically, we have nine, which gets us through three on each shift of the three shifts. This dispatch supervisor position, which I've asked for before is relatively around $65,000 or so. It's basically 25% more of a top step dispatcher. This dispatch position would alleviate the Sergeant or the deputy Chief or Captain and the Lieutenant at the police department from doing the management duties; from scheduling the recertifications, the trainings. It's a very professional occupation. You have to maintain a lot of different certifications just to sit in the seat. It's a long training period and it takes a certain person to do that. So, they would alleviate all of that. There is a front, we call it a third station position in the front so that person would be there. We have the space for it. The dispatch budget of over $500,000 is heavily supplemented by state 91 reimbursement funds, which is about $70,000 a year, which helps us because obviously the state pays us to maintain our 911 as our community 911. It has been cost effective for us because I think the level of service that we provide is fantastic because most of the dispatchers live and work in town. So, they directly respond and know what's going on when you say Center Street or Chapin Street. They know it because many of them went through the school system, are from Ludlow not like the police officers. So, you get that really local type of quality dispatch that we see in other communities. What other communities are having is a problem with staffing. We are fully staffed right now, which we're very happy. Dispatch has been one of the, in my opinion over the past year or so has been a source of glee if you will because we have some real stabilization. So, I'm hoping in the policing side 2023 will be better. So, with that said this dispatch supervisor provides that, roughly you are looking at alleviating a Lieutenant, a Captain and a Sergeant to do other duties. I have plenty of other things that they can do. So, I think this is a natural segway, you won't have to do anything there. So, I think I wrote in there that you won't have to add another position. We won't add another PSAP. Potentially in ten or fifteen years if the call volume went to thirty or forty thousand calls maybe get a third PSAP, but if you stay around twenty thousand calls maybe a little bit higher, the two PSAP's can handle it. I mean if you have a supervisor it would be the tenth dispatcher that could augment, fill shifts when people are sick, fill shifts when people are maybe out on vacation, whatever and they can fill right in. So, you'll actually save a little bit of overtime because they could slide in.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
TOWN OF LUDLOW
2023 JAN 25 P 2:38

Chief Pease: What you guys have to understand too is by having our own dispatchers here in town it saves both the police and fire a lot of time. A lot of times they'll send the call out to both of us at the same time, which improves response times rapidly. The old system, I mean there were some problems that existed that have changed like when you called a 911 from a cell phone and it went to the state police barracks and then it went to the police department and then it went to the fire department and then you got an ambulance. I mean you could be talking five or six minutes before you received any dispatch let alone help. I can tell you now that our response times and the reason that you know you just applauded us for the emergency services that we are able to provide and the first step with that is our dispatchers. They've been doing a wonderful job, but just like anywhere they need a boss, they need a supervisor for continuity everywhere and it's going to obviously some of the duties that are pressed upon the police sergeant, police lieutenant, deputy fire chief or captain and as far as Ludlow big emergency management when a big incident happens all the calls come in, they're all handled right in Ludlow. If they weren't it would take police and fire staff to answer all those phones and it would take away our ability to respond to emergencies, which as we've both demonstrated we have the bare minimum amount of staffing that we do to provide the services that demand our services from Ludlow and it's just growing every year and I think we both demonstrated that. The first part of our operation being successful as it is, is having the dispatch that we do. Just with this recent radio project that just went live last week, it really enables our public safety communications through dispatch to the folks with boots on the ground to help perform their job more efficiently, effectively and benefits all citizens in the town of Ludlow. I think this position is, you know once we combined resources it was kind of like oh jeez there isn't a supervisor and there really needs to be one inside that department.

Chief Valadas: If I can add two more points to Mr. DeBarge's point, the collective bargaining agreement that you signed with the dispatchers last year; that one agreement enabled two dispatchers that were fully trained at other agencies, they transferred to us and they were invaluable because they could start immediately. If taxpayers in Ludlow want to see where their taxpayer money is going show up at three o'clock and there's a three-vehicle accident and I don't care what time of day it is, walk in that dispatch center and those are the people that are right there, that are going to get the help for anything, plane goes down, shooting, whatever, medical emergency. It's right there 24/7 and then it's not uncommon

to hear our radios blow up, which is what we hear is station all units then you know right away oh well this is not going to be good and then you see a fire captain come down and you see a sergeant come from the back or lieutenant or me and everybody goes right there and it's to help because we know what we got to do and we have to take care of this because it's us, it's us, it's not the FBI, the state police are existential and they'll get us up when they can. It's us, we are what serves the town of Ludlow. It's police and fire and EMS and that's what we do.

Mr. Goncalves: Questions? Okay guys, thank you.

Chief Valadas: Thank you very much.

Chief Pease: Thank you.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10 31
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Library Director/Pat McGowan

Mr. McGowan: Hi, how are you doing?

Mr. Goncalves: Wonderful.

Mr. McGowan: Good. So, we're here just trying to advocate for a new position in the library for the youth service department. There currently exists a part-time position, which is allocated at eighteen hours a week. It's currently funded at roughly $17,000 per year and whether you know our initial intent and the apple pie, let me just wait until Derek comes back in. Alright we are just here to essentially add a new position in the youth services department. We currently have a part time position in there, it's eighteen hours a week, it's funded at like $17,000 a year and this is to try and improve the capacity of our organization and these attached charts give you an idea of how we compare to other similar sized towns that are comparable to us as far as number of total positions, total hours worked per week by all staff. One of the longer-term objectives we want to do, Linda and I and the trustees is to build capacity in the organization so that once we're able to figure out the schedule then what we would do is potentially open the hour, increase the hours of operation for the library. Therefore, this will increase the services available to the public and whether that means being open on Saturday nights or whether it means being open Saturday all year round or whether it means being open Saturday all day. Currently we are open nine to one during the entire school year, starting the second week of September through the second week of June.

Ms. Collette: Not at all in the summertime.

Mr. McGowan: Not at all in the summertime and so what it is is really you know we're already producing some good numbers as far as if you look at the number of visitors in the children's programming, this is the third page, July who's in charge of the youth services department has done a good job in generating some good programming and some good numbers associated with that. Don't look at Easthampton because they've apparently neglected to include some numbers, but it is still one of the comparable's but basically with the limited staff that we have, we're able to offer 497 children's programs compared to 21, 714, 94, 210, 11, 18 and 46 with attendance of 5,216 versus 84, 10,670, 1,189, 1,994, 116, 560 and 464. So, we're doing a pretty good with the numbers that we have and the staffing that we have but there's another consideration to is that you know given the fact that sometimes we have people on medical leave, sometimes we have people that are on vacations and to ensure that the highest quality of service be provided we want to ensure that all the locations and service points of access in the library are staffed to the extent of the maximum extent possible, which is first of all safety concern but primarily a customer service concern. We want to have, it's a whole section of the library that could be better staffed and we've been cross training staff in our adult services department in order to provide additional support with regard to that but that takes away from the duties that that staff is also currently engaged in as far as processing books and Linda went to the library the other day and I was showing her the stack of materials five boxes high that are waiting to be processed. The priority is serving the customer and that's what we're doing but this is a secondary add-on affect in that providing that coverage takes necessarily take the duties away of other people that are engaged with the library, for example performing books or developing adult programming or developing programs when we do an outreach or doing marketing. Initially our idea was we would go for the entire apple and then try to keep or retain the part-time position and then add a new full-time position, which would be an additional $38,000 roughly onto our budget. Given the budgetary situation within the town we would

be completely understanding if in your further consideration of it, if we would just convert the part-time position to a full-time position. That would be roughly a $20,000 increase for that position plus benefits, which would basically just add a lot more meat to that department and help facilitate further program development, outreach and service coverage.

Ms. Collette: Patron feedback has been that there's not enough staff up there with all the programming that we've done I think we've done an excellent job with what we have but there's so much more that we could do and would like to do and to have that position fully staffed, the full-time position would be just incredible for us.

Mr. McGowan: I have the union to consider as far as changing the work environment, but you know obviously we seek input when we're developing the schedule and everything like that. So, therefore if this, whether this would be happening immediately or whether it would be just slightly down the road maybe a year or two, if we an additional part-time staff or another full-time staff, look at extending the hours of operation for the library, which is always a good thing because it adds that additional benefit to the public and makes us more available to them.

Mr. Goncalves: Questions?

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman I have one. Just for my clarification, why is it that we as Ludlow have 497 programming, children's programming numbers versus the other communities seem to have very little and then you go to East Longmeadow, and they have way more than us. Why is that?

Mr. McGowan: You know it could be a reporting issue. I'm getting these stats from MBLC website, and it depends on what the director reports as part of their annual reporting, which is a component of state aid. It could also be a staffing issue or the priorities of what the organization is. I don't know why it's such a large discrepancy and to me it's a little suspect as to whether or not the numbers are accurate, but I've got no other data source. Although I could,

Ms. Collette: Well, ours are accurate.

Mr. McGowan: Yes, ours are accurate because we're on top of stuff, but I mean going forward in the future I could certainly get a better data source. Some libraries, I know, are not doing as good a job as they could with regard to providing services and 18,568 for South Hadley, yeah. We really are kind of kicking it out of the ballpark.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 DEC 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: Good job.

Mr. McGowan: That's primarily because, what's that?

Mr. Silva: I guess you don't need anybody.

Ms. Collette: We do.

Mr. McGowan: Well, we want to kick it even further out of the ballpark, but's where it's at and there's also other service aspects to it too but eventually overall one of the main objectives that the trustees and I want to work towards is to increase the hours of operation so that we can therefore better serve the public so we're more accessible.

Mr. Silva: One more question Mr. Chairman, have we seen actual numbers go up since obviously COVID, let's forget about COVID because that's a given but before. From my understanding it was the libraries were really suffering in getting attendance and people to go and now has it really picked up do you think.

Mr. McGowan: Yes, I mean July's been doing a pretty consistently good job and her service there for like 25 years. I think having more resources available to her and having more support from myself as far as providing support like new desks and new chairs and computers and software and new technology and this and that has provided some assistance. We've definitely seen an increase in the adult services attendance and adult services numbers, and I didn't include those numbers on this particular chart or

data set because of it we weren't involved in getting an adult services position at this time frame, but certainly I would be glad to provide additional services and like a longitudinal, longevity.

Mr. Silva: So, is the number that's the difference is that the $35,000 is something that you're seeking that would be an addition?

Mr. McGowan: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Collins: Mr. Chairman, could I just, were you talking about the $35,000 in red that changed?

Mr. Silva: Well, no I'm looking at that and that's what I'm questioning how much more,

Ms. Collins: Right so if you look at, historically if you look at the library in 2022, they went from 521 to 602, that was the position it was one of those positions that had been sitting on the classification plan and was not funded for years and years and years. So, we did fund it. Then they needed a $35,000 increase in their level 1 budget over the prior year, which was just due to regular salary stuff for everybody and $13,000 in general expenses, which I'm assuming that's periodicals and books.

Mr. McGowan: Yes, and also some building repair and maintenance items and office supplies and typically what I've done before in the budget process is to document when our line items are expended and then what monies have been allocated for those line items and then what monies we've utilized from state aid too. Once those line items are expended then we're relying on other sources of income, which would be stated and then document what specifically we're utilizing in state aid to pay for in terms of building repair and maintenance and other stuff like that because overall I think for some reason we have three different repair line items and cumulatively they add up to like $9,000 but every year we incur probably $15,000 to $18,000 worth of repair and maintenance and some of it is anticipatory. We did some repairs to the lights, upgraded the lights resulting in better energy efficiency. We did some repair to the masonry, which helps to prevent,

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 8:
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Collette: It's a very old building.

Mr. McGowan: well, it helps to prevent leakage and damage, further damage. So, some of it is preventative and we typically, instead of saying oh this particular budget year we need a $8,000 or $10,000 increase in our repair line items, we do it incrementally over time. So, we increase $2,000 or $3,000 per year and then document when we appear before whoever we are asked to appear before with what expenses will be coming from various other funding sources; primarily being state aid.

Ms. Collins: So, in addition to that, there's another $39,000, it would be $37,900 that went into the level 2 budget for this position plus benefits. So, it's not the $35,000, the $35,000 was their level 1.

Mr. Silva: Right.

Ms. Collins: So, it's $37,900.

Mr. Silva: So, is that $37,00 in the 676 or is that in addition to?

Ms. Collins: No, it's in the level 2.

Mr. Goncalves: It's $676,000.

Mr. Silva: Okay.

Mr. Rosenblum: My only question was you said it was about $20,000 but it is the $37,900 to bring it up from an 18 to 35–40-hour position.

Mr. McGowan: Correct and it would be a non-union position and we could do 40 hours. We'll squeeze 40 hours out of them. The union is 36 so we can squeeze them when we can, I guess.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay, thank you.

Mr. McGowan: Thank you.

Jodi Zepke, Executive Director – Ludlow Council on Aging/Senior Center

Ms. Zepke: Alright, good evening gentlemen. I'm Jodi Zepke, I'm the Executive Director at the Ludlow Council on Aging and Senior Center. I'm not here to ask for positions. I'm here asking to change the classification of many of my employees. I have ten employees, eight of which are LATOS union. One is not. I have an additional position not on my payroll and I have a grant funded position. Of those eight LATOS union positions, four of them are a level 1. I'm the only department in town that has level 1 employees. I think everybody know build it and they will come, yes. So, I don't have pretty graphs, I'm not, I can't do that stuff. I have plenty of numbers for you because at the end of the day the numbers don't lie. We've gone anywhere from let's start with the cook's position, which is a level 1 which when I hired the starting salary was $16.95/hour and we did 27,000 meals during COVID and that was only service two or three days a week. That's a lot of meals. Right now, we're on track for this year to do 30,000 meals and that's one person making under $20/hour pumping out all those meals. It's about 130 per day in about 20 minutes. Transportation, again going through when we first reopened the building, we were doing about 76 passengers, which is about 4,700 rides. We are up to 121 passengers, which is over 7,600 rides. So, we've gotten an additional 45 rides just in the past four months.

Mr. Goncalves: How many drivers?

Ms. Zepke: Two, one full time and one part time. Again, level 1 employees and people can sit and say well they just pick people up and drive them around and there's nothing further from the truth. They are many, many times our first, they see people that we don't see. They go, my full-time van driver had somebody have a stroke on the van and the only reason he knew that she was having a stroke is because he knows her so well. He called 911 and did it so fast that she actually recovered and is doing very well, but again they go through three different trainings. They also have to be CPR and AED trained. So, it's not just driving somebody from point A to point B. Our events during COVID we shut our doors, everybody was supposed to stay home and nobody stayed home. My employees came in and we did everything from COVID in the park to popsicles, to trivia on zoom, wheel of fortune on zoom, you name it, we did it trying to keep people engaged and a little bit less isolated. Right now, we have over 50 different activities each month that doesn't include the fitness room, the café, lunch. We have over 150 activities going on. I mean we are nonstop. Drive through our parking lot at 11:30 and you'll see. So, we do like the swipes and when we got up to speed in September of 2021, we did almost 18,000 sign ins and we are now up to 29,000. So, you can just tell by how many people are coming to visit. I took an average, I just picked an average day, so before COVID, July of 2019 to December 31, 2019, we had on average on a Tuesday we had 256 people. I took that and once we reopened the doors and we were back up to speed September 2021 to December 31, 2021, on average we were doing 330. I just did this year from January 2021 to September 2022 and we're doing 407. That's just the daily average of the amount of people coming through our doors and yet my employees have never gotten a raise. You know I have the LATOS union will put out Administrative Assistant positions at level 4's and I have my employees are level 3's and I mean they bust their butts all day long. So, I'm just trying to get them to a place where they deserve to be. I'm trying to take the van drivers and the dispatcher to a level 2. I've trying to put the cook at a level 3 and then the outreach worker and the activities director to a level 4. My part-time driver is only funded for 20 hours. I'm paying him 25 hours because I can't meet the transportation needs with 20 hours and I'm also trying to bring the bookkeeper up to 20 hours.

Mr. Goncalves: You've been advertising for somebody too, right?

Ms. Zepke: So, we have interviews tomorrow for a part-time activities' assistant and a third driver for our evening hours.

Mr. Goncalves: Questions?

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman, again I'm going to go back to Human Resources, have you proposed these to her, so she knows which positions are,

Ms. Zepke: Yes, we've talked about it for quite awhile now.

Mr. Silva: Okay and the second part that, what's the total number as far as increases?
Mr. Rosenblum: $19,370.

Ms. Collins: Yes, $19,370 plus $25,000...benefits.

Mr. Goncalves: $44 and change?

Mr. Rosenblum: $44,370.

Ms. Zepke: You know we are doing twice the work with the same amount of people and again I'm just trying to bring them up to a livable wage.

Ms. Martin: My name is Carol Martin, I'm on the board and I just wanted to point something out and expand on. I know it is difficult for you to find a cook,

Ms. Zepke: That's an understatement.

Ms. Martin: in fact, you were in the kitchen cooking and part of the reason was wage am I correct?

Ms. Zepke: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: That's part of the reason for the increase in people because she was cooking.

Ms. Martin: Well, there you go.

Ms. Zepke: Well, thankfully I did find a cook who took that ridiculously low wage and has been pumping out some serious meals. Historically across the board congregate sites have actually like decreased especially before COVID, ours has done nothing but skyrocket. I mean people, there was no other senior center during COVID doing 225 meals a day. Even now we do 130-140 on average. There's no other center around here doing those numbers and again it's under $20/hour.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 13 A 8:37
TOWN CLERK
BROOKLINE

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman, with something like this quite honestly, I'm going to go there to Human Resources and see what recommendations she has. She's more knowledgeable and I'd probably be okay with what she proposes. Later, not now because this is all under advisement. For me, I would get her recommendation eventually and go from there like everyone else actually even though this is not a position thing it's a classification.

Mr. Goncalves: So, do you have exactly what those four positions are? Okay, so we don't have to take additional notes. Good stuff. Thank you.

Ms. Zepke: Thank you for your consideration.

Paulina Matusik, Public Health Coordinator, Board of Health

Moved by Ms. DeSantis to open the Board of Health meeting at 6:15 p.m., seconded by Ms. Lamas.

Ms. Matusik: So, I'm requesting one position it should be pretty simple, I feel like compared to everybody else. I'm going to give this to my board too just because they didn't see what I typed up. So, the health department is requesting a public health director position. This is the only department in town that currently does not have a management position in place. I typed up just a quick summary of what the health department is required to do, what we do, what the roles and responsibilities of a director or management position would be and then what they do for the community members. So, essentially the Board of Health has to report to the Department of Public Health, we use MAVEN, which is how we find out about our COVID cases, tuberculosis, any outbreaks within the community. We use MIIS, which is how our nurses are able to give out immunizations. You need to be trained in that and we also do HAN drills, which is emergency preparedness and those are done quarterly. They have to be submitted to the state as well. We also do retail food inspections, which have to be submitted annually. We need to do beach and drinking water testing annually. Recreational camps need to be addressed annually and then any camper injuries as well and then any lead determinators need to be addressed

and sent over to the state. Basically, the role of a health director would be meet any state compliance requirements, public health standards, establishing work procedures and performance standards, which I also attached for you guys, I think it's the last page for you. They're the workforce standards that the Department of Public Health has put out and what is required by health departments. So, you'll see on the left-hand side the position and then what's required at hire and then required after hire. So, essentially what is required at hire is what a department can hire to meet those standards but after a certain time they have to meet the rest. If you turn onto the back, Boards of Health may have stricter requirements, but those requirements must be met. So, essentially, I'm asking for the management level position, which would oversee the department. So, we have a public health program coordinator they would oversee, an inspector, a nurse, an admin. Also, on your second page are more duties of local health departments. I'm not going to read that because I know you guys can read, but basically environmental health, infectious disease, emergency preparedness, any community outreach. I guess do you have any specific questions? I know you had a long go at this.

Mr. Goncalves: So, while it's fresh, so right now we've got one nurse, Tim and Paulina, yes?

Ms. Lamas: Tim is the health inspector, yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Right, so there's three people. So, you'd be adding a fourth person?

Ms. Matusik: We would be adding a fifth person. So, right now we have no management,

Mr. Goncalves: Oh, the inspector, okay and we have to have an inspector.

Ms. Matusik: we have a public health coordinator, which is essentially my position and I'm doing the interim. So, I'm essentially trying to do both, which is a lot of work. I mean we have no administrative assistant as of right now it's a vacant position but that's also essential for the department.

Mr. Gennette: But you are trying to fill that position?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Matusik: Yes.

Ms. Lamas: That's also on the list too.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Silva: Are we looking for nurses?

Ms. Matusik: We do have an open position that has been posted.

Mr. Silva: Just one?

Ms. Matusik: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Didn't that department have three or four nurses?

Ms. Lamas: So, historically Ludlow has been a nursing only health department and in order to meet, as you see the workforce standards, we are not saying that we don't need another nurse. In order to look at a nursing services assessment, which we talked about at our meetings and with Paulina, is that there needs to be a leadership position before we can really do a full deep dive into where the gaps are for nursing services. That's what the board approved at our last meeting, to move forward with the public health director's position and also the admin and then have further conversations around a nursing services assessment for the department.

Ms. Matusik: So, we're not getting rid of any nursing positions, this is just what the department had. We're just asking for a director position to oversee all the other positions in the department.

Mr. Silva: Here's where I'm coming from, we had a lot of nurses, it was, what I got from people out there, taxpayers, it was great. They were getting a lot of services done. One nurse seems to me like

we're cutting the services that we should be doing. I mean for one nurse to be doing what three were doing before it seems to me it,

Ms. Matusik: So, I'm going to interject a little bit and I don't mean anything by this, but nursing services only focus on the elderly population, but public health focuses on all aspects. So, what about the children, what do the nurses do for the kids, what do they do for the middle aged. Essentially, I'm all about nursing and nursing services, but the twenty first century and what we've grown to and what Ludlow is now, our population is like 22,000 people and it's not just elderly. Yes, we do have a large elderly population, but the focus also needs to be on the kids, needs to be on, we have a drug problem I don't know if you heard the police and fire talking about it but that has to be addressed too and nursing, I'm sorry, was not doing that. So, I'm all in support for nurses and yes hiring another nurse is great, but we also need to focus on food inspections. We have a lot of housing complaints. We have a lot of other needs in the community too that need to be focused on that we can't do if we don't have anybody in charge. If we don't have anybody submitting everything that I just listed. I might not have listed but it is all on this paper for you guys. In order for a health department to run, you need somebody in charge. They need somebody to look to and you need to make sure that you're meeting all the standards because you need to be in compliance in order to work in a health department and if you're not in compliance then there could be outbreaks, disease outbreaks and a nurse essentially you don't want that to happen to because one or two nurses like you said is not going to be able to handle like a COVID outbreak, handle a surge like that.

Mr. Goncalves: During our COVID outbreak, we had nobody in the health department. So, we did,

Ms. Matusik: I wasn't here at that time, so I apologize but,

Mr. Goncalves: So, this is the consensus of the board?

Ms. Lamas: Yes.

Ms. DeSantis: Yes.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10 3
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Tavares: So, Mr. Chairman if I can, I've been since day one, since I got hired by the board been in charge of another nurse. I think our town is not giving enough. I spoke of this with my board. I think I would like to see another nurse being added to the board of health because you are absolutely, what Mr. Silva said that a lot of people have reached out to me and said to me how come you know you guys have stopped doing that because for so many years and since I've been in business I've seen our older people used to be taken care of and I feel like now we're not doing a lot of things. So, my thing was to bring another nurse to Ludlow. The other thing that I brought up at the last meeting, we had named Paulina as the interim health department and she's I think up until July, correct?

Ms. Matusik: Essentially, I don't know if we don't get a department head, I don't know what happens. I don't know the next steps.

Mr. Tavares: So, I had brought up to see what she's done because I think if anybody deserves that position it would be her because if she's doing it, she's still new at this position. So, she's doing an amazing job so that's just my thing.

Ms. Lamas: So, I'd like to ask Carrie because I know Carrie is here and she's kind of explained the process for creating this position and while July is a very rough timeline in terms of the process in municipal government to create a new position, get it approve and go through all the budget processes. Can you share a little bit about that July date that Tony mentioned?

Ms. Ribeiro: Well, right now...so I mean the July 1 date is contingent upon this board approving that position basically,

Mr. Goncalves: The new position?

Ms. Ribeiro: Right. The funding would not be available, it's available now because they've had money in their budget from other positions that weren't filled. They weren't filled for various reasons, not

because we weren't trying..we negotiated with the nurses and gave them, the town gave them a good substantial equitable pay increase.

Mr. DeBarge: We don't pay them.
Ms. Ribeiro: So, again the money is there to make Paulina the interim until July, but that's on an interim basis. There is no Public Health Director position right now in the classification plan to put her into. I mean, unless this board wanted to make it effective immediately you know that is certainly an option, but right now, tonight it's about fiscal year 24 and making the position and the funding effective for July 1.

Mr. Silva: Right but effective immediately then we'd have to have the funds to July 1st, which I don't believer there are. Something we'd have to find.

Mr. Goncalves: Most of the other people that came before us had a lot of comparisons. So, what does Wilbraham have for a Board of Health?

Ms. Matusik: I can compare. So, Longmeadow has essentially everything I'm asking for, a Director of Public Health, a Public Health Program Coordinator, one Nurse, an Inspector and an Admin. Compared to Agawam, who has a Health Agent, everything but the Public Health Coordinator. So, they have everything besides that one extra position, but your population size is Longmeadow is 18,000 people, we have 22,000 and Agawam is like 28,000 people.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay and Wilbraham just for,

Ms. Matusik: Wilbraham is part of a regionalization portion. So, Wilbraham doesn't have, so Longmeadow oversees Wilbraham. Essentially, because their population size is so small. Back in like 2019 health departments regionalized because their cases were so small to share services and help those departments or those towns that were so small that might not have those needs. So, they kind of joined together. Ludlow also regionalize with Palmer, Warren and West Springfield. I can give you guys these, I don't have so much information about it but essentially regionalization could save us some money, but it's mainly, it's using it as like a backup cushion instead of like a fix all problems. So, with our regionalization grant, we can use it for information sharing, for assistance, for training. So, instead of using our budget essentially for trainings we could use that regionalization budget. So, instead of overtime we can use that staff for the regionalization. We can share programs. So, we can save money using shared services with buying equipment. So, for our inspectors, our inspector right now we're kind of outdated where we still use paper but buying that system for inspections we can use the shared services grants, so that saves us thousands of dollars instead of coming out of our budget. So, essentially, I'm going to use this to save money in our budget, but it's not like set in stone yet so I didn't want to really share too much because I can't give you the exact numbers.

Ms. Lamas: It also, we're talking about comparing municipalities that's why the state came out with those workplace standards because there has been a lot of mismatching on how health departments should be staffed and structured. So, the goal of this is prior to the pandemic, they have been working on this for at minimum five years if not I think going on ten at this point. So, they just released these workplace standards and that is the benchmark, that is what we need to reach,

Mr. Goncalves: It's not the law though. It's not a requirement.

Ms. Lamas: but we would have to consult with DPH on what our authority would be as a board to put these in place. I would have to say that.

Ms. Matusik: So, I guess like you can't do inspections if you're not, if you don't have your serve safe and then essentially your inspector is really...you can hire somebody with a high school diploma but then they're supposed to get their registered sanitary within six years of hire. So, I have my board members here who I know Tony owns a restaurant and he probably has a serve safe because,

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, he does, I know that for a fact.

Ms. Matusik: but if he doesn't have that training, he can't go out and do food inspections because that's illegal you need to have training. So, same with management positions, in order to be in management,

you need your Bachelor's or Master's degree and then withing a year of hire you need your register sanitarian. So, there are qualifications that you need in order to do your job. So, essentially, I would say I don't know that it's not a law but in order to be able to do your job effectively, you need qualifications to do that.

Mr. Goncalves: So, you need to be a registered sanitarian at the time of hire and then you need to get the other stuff done within 18 months.

Ms. Matusik: So, it's the registered sanitarian or equivalent eligible. So, if you look on the back that's management positions should meet the requirements as set forth in this document for the position, however, a request may be submitted by the board of Health to waive registered sanitarian. So, there are certain things that can be waived, or it says there are...you can get within a year. Same with a Masters. So, you have to have a master's or bachelor's degree with five years' experience. It's just like any other position you're going to post, there's those qualifications that you have to meet in order to be able to do that job.

Ms. Lamas: I do want to mention that you talked about the pandemic, and I think that we saw a lot happen with the pandemic across not only Ludlow, across the county, the state, the nation, right. We saw a lot of health departments crack wide open in terms of staffing capacity, which goes back to the regionalization which is why the board voted on that. We moved forward with that to fill those gaps and supplement when there's an emergency again and on the flip side of that is also that the workplace standards and that is what DPH is striving for and wants all health departments to try for. So, if and hopefully not, there's another pandemic or something else happens, health departments are in a position where they're able to respond to the community's needs.

Ms. Matusik: I guess I'm asking for a management position because I don't understand how a department can run without management. I mean every other department has a supervisor. I'm calling this the Public Health Director position but essentially, it's a supervisor position it's just that I'm trying to keep it to the standard. I don't think that's a crazy ask, asking for a supervisor to supervise. I know it's a money thing but essentially every other department has a supervisor.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
TOWN OF LUDLOW
2022 DEC 20 A 8:33

Mr. DeBarge: Mr. Chairman, listen you can't have a department especially a department of health without a director, you just can't. We have two glaring examples for that and to your point. One we know right now that we have a department, an elected board that is trying to run their department and its not going well. That's one glaring example. We know that during COVID we had a nonexistent board of health, that's another glaring example where we had a health agent, a board that didn't meet and a lot of confusion through that time. I was talking about it with our Town Administrator and again you can't have a department without a department head, it's just it's not and we can show that by what I just said, and I can add to that as well. Again, we're taking it under advisement and consideration, but to Manny's point too, Ludlow I have always said Ludlow's a community, it's not a town, it's not anything, it's a community. Our nurses were a very big part of that when we had staff. We don't have staff now because we don't pay them well enough so we're not going to get them. So, that's another thing we have to address, but first and foremost you have to have leadership. You have to have direction and you don't have that without the proper authority by that title because if you don't have that then you just have a bunch of people complaining to each other. So, that's all.

Ms. DeSantis: Mr. Chairman, if I may and so when we presented to the board last time, it was a year ago. Since then, to now, we are a different department in the sense that we've really through tremendous transitions. The heavy nursing, yes, the nursing roles were doing a lot of roles that were not clinical that were not nursing per se. They were also doing the emergency preparedness, they were doing the outreach, they were doing community communications, they were doing everything and everything regarding the department. Since we moved or eliminated the heaviness of nursing, we created the coordinator's position and she is a specialist in public health, has taken on a lot of it. So, you say were missing the nursing, we made sure the clinical nursing did not go away and we now have our nurse doing full time clinical nursing. Anything related to nursing she does it and she's doing a very good job since we now defined to her what her job is. It's not doing all these little pieces and not getting anywhere and spinning wheels. So, we're a different department. We're looking for a new administrative assistant. We have an amazing full-time inspector, which is a dream come true that we were able to move Tim into that position. Our board has worked very hard and mainly Kelly, doing some interim management. So, yes, we were free flying, but we were right there trying to make sense of all

this. So, we're a different group, we're a different department now and we're strong and we need to be stronger by having the structure and infrastructure to do what we do best, which is to serve our community and help our community. I agree more nursing would be a blessing for this community and it would be desirable but right now our nursing needs are being covered. In Paulina's job, she has gone beyond as far as hitting the outreach, hitting the narcotics problem, hitting the substance abuse, hitting the other issues in this town with our direction because we recognize that the nurses were doing, dabbling but couldn't pull it together into a specific outreach. So, we have a terrific model, we have a board that's solid, that's supportive, that's community oriented. Kelly is a very strong leader; in her role she has worked overtime in her personal life to help keep the department managed. So, I strongly agree that we have to maintain this and to make it even better and to really stay community focused and to reach more of the population we need a director. We have also talked about, with our administrative assistant and or the director too, the capacity to do back up inspections. We have a full-time inspector now but that would just be a perfect thing to me. We should never see what we did a couple of years ago when we fell behind inspections. We want to ensure that never happens again, if we have the right people in the right place.

Mr. Goncalves: Am I missing, so okay it's you, Tim and Angela and who else?

Ms. Matusik: Nobody. So, I'm the interim,

Mr. Goncalves: Okay because I thought you said...

Talking over each other.

Ms. Matusik: Essentially the Director of Public Health because they have to have their R.S. could be the back up inspector as Adrienne is saying. So, we have the position for the admin we just need to hire for it and then we're asking for a director to oversee the staff, but essentially that director could also be the backup for inspections.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay. Any other questions, comments? Okay, thanks guys.

Ms. DeSantis: Thank you. I hope we don't have to come back for another year.

Mr. Silva: It's all about money.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

6:00 p.m. – School Committee to discuss FY 2024 Budget

Moved by Ms. Bowler to open the school committee meeting, seconded by Mr. Stratton.

Mr. Harrington: Alright, this is our joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Goncalves: Thanks for coming.

Mr. Harrington: Absolutely.

Mr. Goncalves: Alright, so what do you have guys?

Mr. Harrington: So, as you know Mr. Chairman and board members, we talked last spring about getting together quarterly. So, this is one of our quarterly check ins and I don't know if you've been watching our meetings at all, but Doctor Tiano is taking a little bit different approach towards the budget this year, which I think is very good. He's including all members of the board, the school committee. In the past years we had a sub committee that would meet with the administrative team and then they would report back occasionally, but Doctor Tiano has been taking time, along with our business manager, to report at almost every meeting as to kind of where we are and last week, he reported out with kind of getting ready for the budget process. So, I will turn over to Doctor Taino so he can share that information with you. I think he did send it to you on the spreadsheet.

Dr. Tiano: Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much for having us here today. We are, I'll apologize in advance, my voice is a little low like everyone else's.

Mr. Goncalves: You need a candy there,

Dr. Tiano: I have a few but thank you. The last time the two Boards met we had, I believe, shared with you folks or I shared with the Town Administrator a School Committee approve budget timeline where you know we've been looking at our budget starting in August and working our way through each point in the process in terms of working with our budget managers who control the budget the budget either at the school or the department level and setting up time with our committee and delivering to them exactly where we are in that budget process. Meeting with the Town Administrator and the Town Accountant, both Kathy Demetrius and I we feel like we've had some great dialogue in terms of our financial outlook as, coming into the school year with our ESSER funds as you folks know as part of the COVID recovery act ESSER funds, one time money and our school district has put them to very good use both through programs, training, personnel. As we've approached this school year, we know that our ESSER funds have a shelf life and therefore they'll be going away. As we've updated the committee, we've put together presentations and those presentations are online if you go to the Ludlow Public Schools website, go to the school committee and you go to the agenda section under the meetings from September, October, November you'll find not only the agendas but also presentations that we've shared directly with the committee. We shared, back in September, an outlook regarding our ESSER funds both with ESSER two and ESSER three and you folks have that, that's the bottom chart that you have on the page before you. That money is going away and as of right now we have approximately $1.4 million in our operating budget that will be going away for next year and so we shared with the committee as we've been developing our budget and sharing with you folks this evening and we've shared with the Town Administrator and Town Accountant that item number one if you have this in front of you and you're looking at our estimated budget for next year. Our big buckets, if you will, are salaries, we're a service organization, about 80% of our budget is tied up in salaries. Contractually it's steps and lane changes, folks who are familiar with a school contract for the teachers. Teachers and many employees would move to another step on the pay scale each year that they're with us in the district. Our teachers have the opportunity to move over a lane, our lanes if you have a bachelor's degree, a bachelor's plus thirty credits, a master's degree, a master's degree plus thirty credits and so forth and so on. So, Gail Quinn in our business office, under Kathy's direction and we do this every year, calculates what our salaries will be for next year anticipating people earning their college degrees and so forth and we for right now believe that would be about a 2% increase overall of our budget. I'm sorry, of our current salaries of FY23 to FY24 is about a 2% increase. We have taken a different approach in terms of looking at all of our expense lines as we transition from TMS, which was our outsourced business services to Kathy as certified business manager. We have spent hours with each administrator, both collectively and individually and have taken apart, we have hundreds of line items we've taken apart every single line and looking at how that's being spent, making sure that we've put those expenses in the right lines and so forth. It's been a great experience and we're looking at; we're trying not to have any increase in our non-salary expenses. Certainly, we want teachers to have the tools that they need, to have the supplies that they need to meet the needs of our students. At the same time, really fine tuning what that looks like. Our transportation costs, we anticipate approximately a 3% increase in that. We contract through a collaborative, the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative, which is a mouthful, LPVEC for short, as we are part of that collaborative. If the number of buses that we have this year and we carry over to next year, we anticipate a 3% increase there. As I shared with you in the memorandum that out of district tuition, we have student who obviously if we're not able to meet their needs, special education wise and we need to provide that instruction through a third party vendor collaborative or an out of district school those tuitions are set by those entities at the same time the OSD, the Operational Services Division, Commonwealth of Massachusetts sets a percent increase for those tuitions or allows what those entities can raise their prices for the following year. OSD came out about a month and a half ago saying potentially a 14% increase in out of district tuitions. For us, with the same number of students if we just turn the page over, that would be an additional $313,000. At the state level we know that there's lobbying going on from a variety of different, Superintendent's Association so forth, School Committee Association working with the new Governor coming in and that is very difficult to swallow for any district. It'd be difficult for us. Overall, for us to have a level service budget next year, the staff we have, the services that we provide and to be able provide those next year, it would be about a 3% increase and that's not uncommon in terms of a range for a school district our size. In the chart below, I share with you where we will be losing that one-time money. Again, this has been anticipated and so we're wrestling with this part as we develop our budget. The ESSER two funds, they are complete at the end of this year and so currently we have $262,535 built into our operating budget. Some of that is salary, some is operating expenses and so we'll be short that money going into next year. The same thing could be said for ESSER three at the end of this year we will have $83,658

less, which again if we were just to turn the budget page over from 23 to 24, we would be short a total of $1.4 million. That's roughly given the size of our budget about a 4 ½% decrease for us or if we were to have a level funded budget next year, which means the exact same dollar amount from 23 to 24, we would be approximately a 4.5% increase. That would take us to level funded as I stated previously to provide level service, that's roughly 3%. We are still pulling these numbers apart and we're still very much looking at how we function, and you know as the Chair has reminded me and I've reminded our staff, positions that were put into the budget over the past few years, some of them ESSER related were designed to be sun setted. As we look at the positions that we've added over the past few years, many of them are special education and it's tied to student's IEP's and so forth, so we're still looking at our budget overall. This is, we shared last Tuesday with the school committee, this is just context which we're operating, and we thought this would be pertinent to share with you folks as we meet here this evening. Again, for some of our costs increases, some they're not set in stone but we're looking at cost saving measures as we're looking to still grown our school district in terms of our knowledge and capacity of our staff. That's the big picture.

Mr. Goncalves: Marc you had sent out a couple of items that you maybe wanted to discuss, and I don't have the email with me.

Mr. Strange: Yes, a question came up as to kind of the different ways in which Ludlow students leave our district and land in another district and ways in which out of district kids come and land in Ludlow. We thought maybe it was school choice, special ed placements and maybe charter schools. So, we were just hoping to get some edification on that.

Mr. Harrington: We just voted last week, regarding our school choice slots. We have 107 slots that are allocated for school choice kids coming into Ludlow and I believe the number right now I believe is 89 students are filled. So, we do have some capacity to accept more children. With school choice comes funding as well too.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Chairman, can I interrupt on that one because that is something that I really want to talk about. I have been watching the school committee meetings after all of the things we had talked about before I thought it was pretty important to pay attention to stuff and actually at the last meeting you guys had mentioned the 107 seats that were available and you decided to keep that and actually you had asked, how did you get to 107 and it was very arbitrary about how this had actually come about. So, that one question right there really kind of beat me up a little bit. Is that an obligation to the state that if you fill those seats that you are mandatory, you have to pay anybody under that, that's your total number of special educations seats, correct?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Harrington: No.

Ms. Bower: They're not special education, no.

Mr. Goncalves: No, they could be any seats.

Dr. Tiano: No, it's the opposite.

Mr. Gennette: So, can you please explain?

Dr. Tiano: Sure, you know across Massachusetts when this act was put into effect, this provides the opportunity for students in one town or community, if they wanted to attend school in another town. If we have a Ludlow student who would like to attend school in Belchertown this allows for that to happen. So, every year the school committees in every community if they would like to participate, they need to formally vote that, which this committee has done for many years. The committee votes for seats that are available for students from other towns to come into Ludlow. That 107 number, and I asked the same question, why wasn't it 110 and there was like everything else in every community there's a story behind that, but we don't have 107 seats available next year, we have currently we have 90 students, so we'll have 18 seats available. Now I'll work with the building administrators to find out exactly where those seats are available. If we have high class size in particular grade levels, we would not make seats available at those particular grade levels. It's a very specific process mandated by law that Sue Santos in my office runs and folks come in, they get approved, we send that information to the state. The state then takes money if you will from that town. Say you have a student coming from

Belchertown to Ludlow in their chapter 70 funding, it's $5,000 per student, that money will show up on our cherry sheet here and that's how that money gets transferred. So, for 18 unfilled spots, say we have 18 and we don't always fill, we're not always at 107. Back in 18/19' we were at 102. We get $5,000 per student.

Mr. Goncalves: So, why are we paying $2.5 million for how many kids are we sending out that it's costing us $2.5 million?

Ms. Bowler: That's different that's not school choice.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay, that's a different program.

Ms. Bowler: That's, those are kids on IEPs that,

Mr. Goncalves: Okay.

Mr. Gennette: So, what's the cost associated with just a regular student coming into this town, would be whatever the average is per student. This just kind of fits in that mold. So, I don't understand what the distinction is for 107, why is that specific number? Why isn't it 2000? Why isn't it 10? I don't understand why that is 107.

Dr. Tiano: It has to do with capacity that we have in order to bring in students into our classrooms. To keep our class sizes at a certain amount and the school committee has one of their goals and one of our guidelines. You know if we had 25 students in every fourth-grade class, we would not be bringing in fourth-grade students.

Mr. Gennette: I got it.

Ms. Bowler: The number that was agreed to, I think you explained at the last school committee meeting was the number that was agreed to years ago and just has never been changed, but at that time, I don't even know how many years ago that year,

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 APR 20 A 8:31
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Harrington: Maybe about 15 years.

Mr. Goncalves: Just out of curiosity it's about $15,000-$16,000 per kid to educate, right if we're doing the math? So, why would we want to take an extra 20 if we don't need to.

Mr. Gennette: I do believe it's 17.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, it's 17 but,

Mr. Harrington: Why would you want to take in school choice kids?

Mr. Goncalves: No, no, no, why would we, so we're at 89, what's the advantage to get to 107?

Mr. Harrington: So, initially when school choice came in it was that as they came it was an extra source of revenue if a student from Wilbraham wanted to come to Ludlow you couldn't do that years ago. So, we created this bucket where you could do that and then Wilbraham is going to give Ludlow $5,000 to educate that student. If there's special education costs associated with it, that's a whole different, the business manager handles that later on. So, it was looked at as a way to get these funds in and I think the funds came into about $500,000 over a few years' time.

Mr. Goncalves: Right and I know that the per student cost isn't going to change if you put one more person in the classroom. I'm just wondering at what point do you get specific and start looking at each grade and because you end up taking 15 kids in on this program you've now had to put a second teacher in place and financially it makes no sense and how close are you looking at that number when you're deciding you're going to take 107. Is it going to be 16 third graders, 4 fourth graders? So, where there is an advantage, you're not adding a teacher, adding additional services for the $5,000 doesn't even get close to making up the cost of bringing those additional kids in.

Dr. Tiano: But 90 of those kids are already with us.

Mr. Goncalves: I understand but let's just say now the 17, do you say we can take 17, we can't take a fourth, fifth and eighth grader because it's going to push us into a new teacher?
Mr. Harrington: Right.

Ms. Bowler: Correct.

Mr. Goncalves: Are you guys looking at that?

Dr. Tiano: Absolutely.

Mr. Harrington: Absolutely. So, typically you'll see the numbers you'll have ten school choice students graduate. So, that essentially opens up ten more slots. So, then the administration will go back and say okay third grades a little light this year, we could plug in three. Sixth grade is a little light, we get three more over there. Eight grade,

Mr. Goncalves: Without the additional classroom or,

Mr. Harrington: yes, absolutely. I understand what you're saying.

Mr. Goncalves: So, it's probably a simple one but for me I'm looking at $5,000, $15,000 per kid to educate, you're getting $5,000. Trying to figure out the economics of it.

Mr. Harrington: Right. I think it's a good question. We've had this same debate on our level as well too because we've talked about that, does there come a point where you are now hiring more teachers and you're not getting those funds sort of in return on the other end, but we don't do that, we just find out where the extra capacity is really the administration finds out where the extra capacity is. There should be no additional teachers being hired because we're taking school choice students.

Dr. Tiano: Absolutely.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 8:
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette: And you have 12 graduating this year, is that correct?

Dr. Tiano: We have I believe 12 graduating. Eight potential graduates.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman. My question is, on those ESSER funds. So, we took ESSER funds, and we actually spent some of those on regular operating expenses that are going to continue even though we knew that they were going to disappear years down the road? I mean I don't know what the logic was in that,

Mr. DeBarge: That's what I don't understand either.

Mr. Silva: I mean let's say if we used an awful lot of them then we'd be in a real predicament. This money is not there but without it we can't operate. So, I don't where, why that was or so and it seems to me by looking at this for the deficit that you're having now is the ESSER funds.

Mr. Goncalves: It will be.

Mr. Harrington: So, and I think Dr. Tiano had mentioned this before, because we had this discussion briefly, so we knew that as a district and this was before some of these members were on the board that you know there's cliff to this funding plan, to ESSER funds. So, most of those funds were earmarked towards, you know ESSER one was to redo the ventilation systems and all that stuff. ESSER two we started getting into some of the special education needs. Okay, these kids have been out of school for a period of time, we're going to need social workers, we're going to need X, Y and Z. That's the discussion we're having right now is there is a sunset to some of those positions. So, how many, what's that capacity going to be, that's what the administration needs to figure out right now. Last year, if you recall when we were kind of up against the wall, we had a really robust debate amongst ourselves saying okay there's seven teachers that we we're talking about cutting, I think it was a large number of teachers last year.

Mr. Goncalves: Thirteen.

Mr. Harrington: Thirteen or so. We, amongst ourselves said listen we got to keep our head above water right now so last year we did make a conscious vote to use some of those ESSER funds to keep some of those teachers in place knowing that we're going to be in this position where we are right now. Some of the other ones, we knew that those positions where you know possibly or there's going to be an end to those things, but the reality is, and Sarah can speak to this more than anybody is that these kids still aren't ready because of the effects of COVID and being out of school for a full year. So, now that's where the administration has to decide. Kids still need these social workers, kids still need these speech pathologists and everybody else, but when we put these people in there initially we knew that these funds were going to end.

Mr. Silva: So, is there potential to say look it we're going to look at some of these programs that we did with ESSER funds and do away with them or can we do away with them and actually save some funds?

Mr. Harrington: It's a question for the administration.

Dr. Tiano: Well, as we've been working administratively and it's interesting as Kathy and I you know, coming in together and looking at our budget. ESSER has backfilled a few areas where, to make the budget whole coming into FY23. So, it's not necessarily you could say this group of people is ESSER funds and its straight social workers. We've had special ed needs that ESSER funds additional staffing, without the additional funds, ESSER funds were used to create a focus teacher to open up another program within our special education programming at the schools, which saves us money from sending students out of district and so forth, but in the immediate money was used as we can tell to kind of backfill some of the holes that we had in addition to several position that we added last year.

Mr. DeBarge: Mr. Chairman. Hi everyone thanks for coming in, I have the same concerns that Mr. Silva had, but I'd like to take your graphs first. So, the first box is 3% to cover the changes in cost for what you listed, correct?

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 8:37
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Dr. Tiano: Yes.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay and then in the second box you're losing 4.5% because of the ESSER for FY24. So in order to, let's just say hypothetically, keep going the way that you are now with everyone that you have, ESSER, and all of that, you'd need 7.5%?

Dr. Tiano: That's what it's looking like right now.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay, I guess I just, well you explained it, explained ESSER. I don't need to beat a dead horse. I guess I don't know, I guess you guys have a lot of work to do.

Dr. Tiano: Yes, we do.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: With the 2 and a half, and I mean you guys are 46% of the budget at 7% would be about a 14% increase. It would be a little over our 2 and a half and then I mean nobody else would get anything. So, again we don't have to beat a dead horse.

Dr. Tiano: We're not proposing that we're just kind of sharing where we're at right now in the process.

Mr. Goncalves: Any ideas? No additional, maybe state money coming down? Anybody talking about anything or any federal money coming down?

Mr. Harrington: The House one won't come down until the end of January with the new Governor she'll be,

Mr. Goncalves: There's like a habit of throwing some on there to wean people, just don't go dry. Well, it's true right?

Dr. Tiano: No, it's true and for example with the 14% on the district tuition, yes we're hoping that the Governor may look at one time monies to kind of ease that burden and then look at the circuit breaker reimbursement, which is money that districts received to offset some of these out of district special education that's typically funded at 75% if they bump that 80%; again, I don't work at the state level, but that's some of the conversations that are happening as I understand it.

Mr. Silva: One more question, did you put any money, just extra in there for what state cherry sheets going to come in with as far as schools. Why did you use a flat number at this point?

Dr. Tiano: The schools are funded basically from what we submit to them from our October 1st student population. There's an extensive formula and for a district like ours kind of caught in the middle, it does not go up,

Mr. Silva: It doesn't fluctuate?

Dr. Tiano: No, it doesn't fluctuate, and I apologize I don't know off the top of my head how, what it looked like in the past few years.

Mr. Harrington: So, when they redid the Chapter 70 formula Ludlow ended up with an extra $70,000. So, it was very minimal. It didn't have too much of an impact.

Mr. Silva: I once looked at that formula and it doesn't make any sense.

Ms. Bowler: It doesn't.

Mr. Silva: Okay. Yes.

Dr. Tiano: I did a paper on it one time and,

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, Mr. Gennette.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette: So, are there any grants that we are chasing right now? Are three opportunities that we're hoping will come through that are kind of hanging in the wind? We don't know.

Dr. Tiano: So, in terms of our alternate funding sources that we have in the district. What we receive through local appropriation, which is a combination of Chapter 70 monies and local is $34 million. We actually are running a $38 million operation and through entitlement grants such as IDA, which are special education, title one funds, title two, title three and so forth, those offset a lot of costs and so we're hoping that some of those come in higher and by us doing our due diligence, which we do in terms of making sure that every grant submitted on time. Kathy and our grant managers are on top of that. We do have other grants that are competitive grants such as our comprehensive school health services grant as well as revolving accounts where we take in tuition for pre-K, tuition from bussing and so forth. The athletic gate. So, we're really looking at ways not only are expenses but also to how we take in revenue.

Mr. Gennette: I was asking particularly because of the disabilities act funds, and I know that DESE was trying to...Thank you.

Dr. Tiano: Oh, you're welcome.

Mr. Goncalves: So, now that we have Kathy and we're not outsourcing it, through this whole process did we find any money hanging around? Little pockets here and there? None. Okay. We were hoping.

Dr. Tiano: I ask her that every day.

Mr. Goncalves: Open purchase orders or anything hanging around that maybe,

Ms. Demetrius: I will add that there are, well, Erica Faginski, Dr. Erica Faginski Clark, who is one of our grant coordinators and does a lot of title ones and she also went after two grants one of them is an early

literacy. I should have brought my computer, it's not a lot of money but it will help with some testing stuff that has to happen. We're still in the running for that. She did also go after another one, which I received an email today that we didn't get that one. So, competitive grants are just that, they're competitive grants. They're usually smaller amounts, usually one-time deals. So, we didn't get one, but we're still hopeful for the other. But no, I did not find anything.

Mr. Harrington: Those grants typically don't really have much of an impact on your everyday operating budget. You're going to do some special programs, but you have to bring in a new speech pathologist that's going to be there just for the time of that grant. So, it doesn't really help with the,

Talking over each other.

Mr. Harrington: well, yes and they were. So, I hope you guys aren't taking this as a shot across the bow. This is not, it's truly informational.

Mr. Goncalves: Any big capital items that may the Dias foundation could help out anywhere?

Mr. Harrington: I don't know. I mean I'm sure there's,

Ms. Demetrius: I haven't seen any large gifts come through.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2022 DEC 20 A 10:37
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Harrington: But he's asking is there's something that there's a need that could maybe offset the traditional budget if were to reach out to a private entities.

Dr. Tiano: No, I'll definitely look, and I'll look for directions in terms of where to look.

Mr. Goncalves: They love to help. A lot of times you just have to ask.

Mr. Harrington: Yes, they have been incredibly helpful over the years and really generous. So, our process you know we're doing exactly what you guys are doing with all the town departments. So, he's doing it with his principals. Dr. Tiano presented it to us last week. We're kind of like okay, it's going to be a tough year. The timeline is going to be different from our perspective this year. Typically, we wouldn't take vote, the school committee wouldn't take a vote until just before town meeting. I believe you are going to be asking for the vote sometime in January or February this year.

Dr. Tiano: February, we have our budget hearing and you're working from the budget timeline from you folks and through the Town Administrator to be able to have that and once the committee votes on it doesn't mean that you still can't open it up and revise it and so forth. Our goal is to have presented January 10th what our budget looks like and as I've shared each one of our budget managers is putting together budget sheets. We have them so that when you see a number in a dollar amount and a line item, you'll be able to find exactly what we're buying from it to the very best of our ability. You know it will from Amazon we're buying 50 cases of paper for East Street and so forth at however much it is per unit. We're really forcing our folks to really nickel down because we will have to reduce in some area, and we can do that surgically as opposed to just lopping it off.

Mr. Goncalves: Are we...the procurement process with our procurement person? Is there a reason we're not?

Mr. Strange: Which process?

Mr. Goncalves: Like buying paper on Amazon?

Mr. Strange: They have their own procurement person.

Mr. Goncalves: I mean it's a kumbaya moment, maybe we could cut even further here?

Ms. Demetrius: So, if I could interject, thank you Chairman. So, there is a collaborative, it's Hampden County something, I forget the whole name and it has to do with a lot of school supplies, you know think of those blue composition notebooks you know from years ago. That type of stuff, paper, art stuff and good old fashioned copy paper and we belong to the organization, and we really don't have to do much

to do so. They do like this us to give numbers of what potentially you know buy off of that list and then once the numbers come, we get to use those numbers. So, that's where all of our paper from the district is purchased just through that. I can certainly reach out to Lori Belanger, I think is her name and see if she has a better source but that's how we've always you know at least since I've been there, that's how we've gotten our paper. So, the whole districts is buying from the same place at the same price.

Mr. Goncalves: Kim, anything? You like you wanted to say something?

Ms. Collins: Nope.

Mr. Goncalves: Sue, you're awful quiet back there.

Ms. Santos: I'm taking notes.

Mr. Goncalves: Alright then. How about on this side, you guys good?

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, good to go.

Mr. Gennette: I'm good but you know I just want to say thank you because I've been watching your public meetings and they're so much better than they've been. Just really appreciative of all the information you guys have been putting out. So, thank you for the hard work.

Mr. Harrington: Dr. Tiano has been coming to every meeting and giving us financial updates. Every member is involved in this discussion right now. We have provided him with our goals, and you know where we would like to see it. We want to have the music program to exist, the art, all of those important things. We give him that and we'll see what he comes back to us with. So, we're going to take our vote sometime in February, it will become our budget and at that time, just prior to that we will have already done our school choice lottery. So, we'll know what we have for numbers not that they can't change as it goes down. So, that'll be built into the budget.

RECEIVED
2022 DEC 21 A 10:38
CLERK'S OFFICE
LUDLOW

Dr. Tiano: Yes.

Ms. Demetrius: Dr. Tiano, Mr. Chairman I just want to circle back. I know we've kind of gone back and forth on the topic. It is such a big number, I just kind of wanted to definitely point out especially for people at home that might not know how it works. So, this out of district number that could potentially become 2.5; I just wanted to explain that the process for that is not one that is taken lightly in the sense of we do everything that we can, not we, the sped director and the principles and the people in the different programs that we have. They do what they can to keep the children in the district. The value of it is just huge in so many ways, to keep the child in the district, going to school here, but there are times when our programs aren't working for that particular child. So, the first step we do is usually what's called a 45-day placement. So, they'll go to an out of district 45-day placement and I was actually just talking to the sped director about this yesterday, I said do you ever get any, like how does that work, do you ever get somebody that goes to the 45-day placement and comes back to our district? She said yes, she says a lot of times what will happen is while they're in that 45-day placement the people there that are specialized can learn different tools to work with that particular child, give that information back to us at the district and then we can take that child back and successfully work with them and then sometimes the child might have to go out of districts. Again, you know we try to restrict it as much as we can and bring some back when we can but the other piece of it that's important to know in order for that child to go out of district it's a whole team of people that meet. It's the parents, some of the educators, the director of special education, the people that have done the testing on this child and then once that meeting happens and if there is an agreement that they are going to go to a particular out of district placement, an IEP is written up and it has a placement page and those both have to be signed by the parents and they have to agree that their child is going to go to this particular place. So, it's quite a process. It does take a while and so the 2.5 you know while it is a big number, the director has definitely done a great job over the years getting that number down and I just wanted everybody to understand that it is quite a process to you know be at that stage.

Dr. Tiano: But sometimes there are questions around who are these students and why are they out of district and so forth and not only are we obligated, but it's our passion to keep them in the least restrictive environment, which is with their peers here in Ludlow.

Ms. Demetrius: And when we can, we bring them back.

Mr. Goncalves: It takes...of the budget, so it is a good size number.

Dr. Tiano: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Harrington: Those are usually pretty severe, there's transportation involved with that, there's nursing, medical. There's a lot that's involved with some of those students.

Mr. Goncalves: Does that number include like we had talked about at one point, where you had somebody that you had placed, I think they were special ed and they were out in the Pittsfield area or something and you were actually delivering parents and transporting them back and forth. That's in that number?

Mr. Harrington: Yes.

Ms. Bowler: It could be a kid who's living at a program. It could be a kid who's in a day program. There're various types of programs you know that a child could be,

Mr. Goncalves: You could have one child that is a couple hundred thousand dollars?

Mr. Harrington: Easily, absolutely.

Ms. Bowler: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: So, it's not a ton of kids so much as big ticket items.

Ms. Bowler: It could be, yes.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:37
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Rosenblum: It's not actually, it can go past the time that they leave the school system, isn't it?

Mr. Harrington: We are obligated until the age of twenty-two.

Dr. Tiano: Until the age of twenty-two, right and that's where budgeting becomes difficult in terms of those numbers and when you have students who move in who have needs and so forth that we didn't see coming. That could throw off your budget.

Mr. Harrington: We also provide special education services for Saint John the Baptist.

Mr. Goncalves: The parish is St. Elizabeth. The school is St. John. Okay, everybody good? Thank you, guys, very much. Want to adjourn your meeting?

Moved by Ms. Bowler to adjourn the school committee meeting, seconded by Mr. Stratton.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

East Street Revitalization Project: We received a proposal from Weston & Sampson to amend the existing East Street Revitalization Overlay District, which was last amended in October of 2005. It included the current district bylaw in your packets. The proposal would provide additional design and development standards for pedestrian circulation and amenities. Landscaping, parking, lighting and architectural design. The project also entails draft design and development standards for the overlay district. Weston and Sampson will complete a field photographic inventory of the district to capture existing conditions related to benches, paving and pathway materials, crosswalks and pedestrian safety intersections, planters, signage, stormwater management, and lighting. Weston and Sampson will also create two conceptual design level site plans and four preliminary sections considering utilities, surface treatments, and feature details. This project is being funded by the community planning grant that we received from the state for $75,000. The work should be complete in time for the October 2023 Special Town Meeting.

Greenstead Grove Update: Greenstead Grove is the housing development set to go in on Fuller Street across from Harris Brook. So, we spoke with Way Finders to get an update on their financing, and their DHCD financing pre-application was accepted. This was the second time they had submitted a pre-application. Once that gets accepted, they apply for a full round of financing, which is due in January. Those typically do get funded, which means that the rough estimate for construction to begin on that project will be Spring of 2024.

Vets Center Lease: We are close to an agreement with ProCon on a lease agreement for the new Vet center at 485 Holyoke Street. We're hoping to have a contract for the Board to sign by the end of January with a move in date sometime in April or March.

LHS Sports Complex: I spoke with Mott MacDonald today, they had a change in project manager, who was John Sable who was managing the project is not longer with the company, so they had to obviously switch over to a new project manager that's caused a little bit of a delay, but they submitted their notice of intent to the Mass DEP and the conservation commission. That's basically like a mapping of the wetlands and that whole process. There's a question from DEP is whether the existing track was properly permitted when constructed and whether there is an existing order of conditions on the property. ConCom also has some technical questions, which may or may not be able to be addressed before the public hearing tomorrow night. We've since found out that they will not be able to, so the next hearing will be February 15th. As it stands, though construction schedule remains intact, construction should be sometime between July and December of 2023.

CORRESPONDENCE:

182. Board to discuss and approve Eversource to place a streetlight on existing pole between 22-38 Ronald Street.

Moved by Mr. Silva to approve Eversource to place a streetlight on existing pole between 22-38 Ronald Street, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

183. Regina Stanek requesting to be appointed as a member of the Ludlow 250th Celebration Committee.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to make Regina Stanek a member of the 250th Celebration Committee, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

184. Luis Vitorino notifying the Board of his resignation from the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) Board of Directors, effective immediately.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to accept Luis Vitorino's resignation from the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) Board of Directors effective immediately, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to appoint Mr. Gennette to the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company Board of Directors effective immediately, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

185. Springfield Water and Sewer Commission notifying the Board that it is now accepting applications for the Customer Assistance Program for FY23.

Moved by Mr. Silva to file, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

186. Daniel Valadas, Chief of Police and David Irwin, Lieutenant notifying the Board of the names of individuals being submitted for annual appointment as Special Police Officers with the Ludlow Police Department effective January 1, 2023.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to accept Daniel Valadas, Chief of Police and David Irwin, Lieutenant of the Special Officers with the Ludlow Police Department effective January 1, 2023, the list that was submitted, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

187. Daniel Valadas, Chief of Police and David Irwin, Lieutenant requesting conditional appointment of three Special Police Officers, David Belanger, Kyle Sorensen, Quashawn Branch, effective December 21, 2022.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve Daniel Valadas, Chief of Police and David Irwin, Lieutenant for their request for conditional appointment of three special officers David Belanger, Kyle Sorensen and Quashawn Branch effective December 21, 2022, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

UNFINISHED BUINESS

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to approve and sign the Liquor License for Tin Cup Facilities, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to approve and sign the Selectmen Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2022, with all members present, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to approve and sign the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2022 with Mr. Goncalves absent, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 4-0-1. One Abstention.

NEW BUSINESS

Board to discuss and vote on new position requests and reclassifications.

Ms. Collins asked that the $5,500 under DPW mechanic to foreman be crossed out. She also wanted to make sure the Board was aware that some positions may still be on the classification plan that are unfunded.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 APR 20 A 10:37
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Ribeiro explained that the three PW3 positions for the DPW will stay on the classification plan, they are currently trying to hire for them. The DPW had three PW3's that are unfunded.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to table the discussion and vote on new position requests and reclassifications, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to approve and sign the Liquor Licenses, Common Victualler Licenses and Entertainment Licenses for 2023.

Moved by Mr. Silva to approve and sign all Liquor Licenses, Common Victualler Licenses and Entertainment Licenses that have been approved by our inspectors for 2023, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Silva to waive fees for the following Common Vic and Entertainment Licenses, Ludlow Council on Aging, Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield- Christ the King Church, Ludlow Community Center Randall Boys and Girls Club, Brigham Lodge AF & AM, The First Church in Ludlow, St. Elizabeth's Parish, Family Church, St. Peter's/St. Paul Ukrainian Church, Exit 7 Players LTC, Our Lady of Fatima Church, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to approve and sign the Class I, II, III Licenses for 2023.

Moved by Mr. Silva to approve the Class I, II & III if approved by our inspectors for 2023, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to approve and sign the ABCC 2023 Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form.

Moved by Mr. Silva to approve and sign the ABCC 2023 Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to approve and sign the 2023 Renewal Certification Form.

Moved by Mr. Silva that the Board hereby certifies that the premises described in the 2023 renewal

applications for the above-mentioned municipalities are now occupied, used, controlled by licensing and will be on January 1, 2023, the 21 renewal applicants have been approved by local licensing authorities and forwarded to ABCC, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to reopen the Special Town Warrant for consideration of the two articles for addition, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Gennette that we add Article 3 pursuant to GLC 164, article 134 to see if the town will vote to grant the Board of Selectmen the authority to research, develop and participate in a contract or contracts to aggregate the electric load of the residents and businesses in the town and for other related services independently or in joint action with other municipalities retaining the right of individual residents and businesses to opt out of the aggregation, pass any vote or take any action relative or unto submitted by the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to add Article 4 to the Special Town Warrant to see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of MGL chapter 143, section 3Z in order to permit a part-time Building inspector to practice for hire or engage in the business which she or he is certified, licensed or registered under the State Building Code, while serving as such inspector, pass any vote or take any action relative thereto submitted by the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Move by Mr. Gennette to reclose the Special Town Warrant, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve and sign the letter for the Animal Control Officer authorizing her to perform her duties, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to authorize use of Building Infrastructure funds to pay for 54 Winsor Street repairs.

Mr. Strange explained that there was a power failure at 54 Winsor, which is one of the buildings that the town took over from the school and in that power failure on the circuit that failed was our sprinkler system and when the power went out it got over pressurized, and the water came out and flooded the basement. The cost was $22,043 to clean it up and mitigated and this did not meet the deductible. Because this was not part of the budget, the town would like to use the building infrastructure funds to pay for those repairs.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2023 JAN 10 A 10:38
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette asked what the balance is for the building infrastructure?

Mr. Strange said it is currently $143,000.

Mr. Silva asked how close the town is to auctioning off some of these buildings?

Mr. Strange stated that it is still an unresolved issue with those two buildings. The town has a lot of tax title properties and many of them have squatters so that has delayed the process a bit. They are hoping for the spring or summer of 2023. It is a process to get the squatters identification and go through the entire eviction process.

Mr. Silva explained that there are a lot of companies now that will come in and take it on with the squatters so they we don't have to expend funds, lawyers, etc. to get them out.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to authorize the use of the Building Infrastructure funds to pay for 54 Winsor Street repairs, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to acknowledge and approve the Citation for the 100th birthday of resident Isilda Afonso.

Mr. Goncalves read the citation and wished Isilda a happy birthday.

All of the Selectmen wished Isilda a happy birthday as well.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Rosenblum wished all residents Happy Holidays and to enjoy time with family and be healthy and safe.

Mr. Silva reminded anyone watching that there were a lot of requests, and the budget is well over where we can be. Just sit tight and they are going to do the best they can and hopefully have a reasonable tax rate. Right now, they are working diligently to bring those numbers down. Let everyone know that there is a tax classification hearing is on Friday, December 23, 2023, at 10 a.m. and encouraged residents to attend.

Mr. DeBarge thanked everyone for coming to wreaths across America on Saturday, including the organizer, Veterans Service Director, Eric and all of the volunteers. They placed 967 wreaths on the graves. Great job by all. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, and Happy New Year.

Mr. Gennette was encouraged to see the Board of Health going through their whole process again. He also thanked Luis Vitorino for his recommendation for the seat for the Board of MMWEC and thank him for all of the work he has done on that over the years. Wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Mr. Goncalves thanked Mr. Strange for being a great asset to the town. Encouraged the residents to let the Board know if there are any complaints or suggestions about what happened tonight. Thanked all of the departments that came in tonight. He's happy that they are starting the budget process early. There is a special town meeting on January 9th and reminded precinct members to come. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year and wished for everyone to stay safe and enjoy their families.

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
APR 29 10 W '58
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, to adjourn this meeting at 7:55 p.m., not return to open session, and to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating position of the public body, seconded by Mr. Silva.

Mr. DeBarge, yes, Mr. Gennette, yes, Mr. Silva, yes, Mr. Rosenblum, yes, Mr. Goncalves, yes. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.