

**GILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 2, 2007 WORK SESSION
3:00 P.M.**

The Gilford Board of Selectmen met in a work session on Monday, April 2, 2007 in Conference Room A of the Gilford Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH. In attendance were Chairman Alice Boucher, Selectmen Connie Grant and Gus Benavides, Town Administrator Evans E. Juris and Administrative Secretary Sandra Bailey. Absent was Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett.

The Board of Selectmen recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Boucher opened the work session and stated that the purpose is to review the proposed Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics. She turned the work session over to Town Administrator Evans Juris, who provided a brief overview. He cited that several RSA's pertain to these proposed Codes and passed out copies for each Board member. They included RSA 31:39-a; 42:1; 42:1-a; and 673:13. He also pointed out that it was the intent of the 2004 MRI report to address these matters and that these Codes already exist in many communities.

Chairman Boucher then began the work session by going through each document, starting with the Code of Ethics. Selectman Grant stated that she feels the fourth item in the Preamble is subjective and suggested that someone could get passionate about a topic – is that civil? Selectman Benavides stated that he feels you can disagree on a subject and still show respect. He pointed out the responsibility of the Chairman in this type of situation. Town Administrator Juris agreed with Selectman Benavides.

Chairman Boucher proceeded to run through the seventeen (17) items covered in the Code of Ethics. Some minor corrections were noted in the wording of some items. Discussion also ensued on the matter of financial disclosure. Examples were provided of how financial disclosure would come be involved with a board or committee member.

Selectman Grant suggested condensing some of the language in the Code, particularly Item #7. Under Item #13, Selectman Grant inquired about Budget Committee members interfering in the administrative functions of the Town. She also reiterated her previously stated position that she would like to see the Code condensed. Town Administrator Juris responded to her concerns and suggested that redundancy in the Code will ensure that it is understood.

Further discussion ensued on whether or not the Code of Ethics would be for all board members or just new ones. Town Administrator Juris indicated that he would like it to be effective for all officials and cited RSA 31:39-a, which if adopted at Town Meeting, would specifically define a Conflict of Interest.

Under Item #17, it was suggested that the third paragraph be deleted.

Selectman Benavides stated that he feels it is important to set standards for officials. Discussion then ensued on the possible scenarios if an official were to refuse to sign the Code of Ethics. Town Administrator Juris pointed out that this would depend on whether it is a policy or an ordinance and the issue of accountability of officials to voters.

Chairman Boucher then began her review of the Code of Conduct. The Board reviewed and discussed Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct, Board Conduct with One Another and Board Conduct with Town Staff. Town Administrator Juris provided an explanation on the newly proposed portions of this Code.

Selectman Benavides expressed concerned with the “Never publicly criticize an individual employee”. This prompted extensive discussion on possible scenarios where it would be awkward for a Selectman not to act as a buffer in certain situations. After further discussion, the distinction was made between acting as a buffer to diffuse a situation and taking formal action.

The Board will continue this work session on Wednesday, April 11, 2007, immediately following the regular Selectmen’s meeting at 3:00 p.m.

The work session was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Assistant