

GILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
December 18, 2013
Town Hall

The Board of Selectmen convened in a regular session on Wednesday, December 18, 2013, at 7:00 p.m., at the Gilford Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH. Selectmen present were Kevin Hayes, John O'Brien and Gus Benavides. Also present was Town Administrator Scott Dunn.

Staff members in attendance included Finance Director Geoff Ruggles, DPW Director Sheldon Morgan, Acting Police Chief Jim Leach, Acting Deputy Police Chief Kris Kelley, Police Sergeant Dustin Parent, Police Field Training Officer Doug Wall, Police Officer Curtis Mailloux, Police Sergeant Eric Bredbury, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Denise Gonyer, Fire Chief Steve Carrier, Director of Planning and Land Use John Ayer and Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey.

- 1. Non-Public Session (6:00 p.m.)** Selectman Benavides moved to enter non-public session at 6:00 p.m., pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II, (a)(b)(c)(d) to discuss the conveyance of real property, matters which would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person and personnel issues. Selectman O'Brien seconded. Motion carried on a roll call vote with all in favor. Present were Kevin Hayes, John O'Brien and Gus Benavides. Also present was Town Administrator Scott Dunn.

Selectman O'Brien moved to exit non-public session at 7:00 p.m. and seal the minutes. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

- 2. Pledge of Allegiance** - The Selectmen recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 3. Announcements/Presentations**

- 3.1.** Town Offices and Library will be closed on Wednesday, December 25, 2013 for Christmas and Wednesday, January 1, 2014 for New Year's Day. Library is also closed all day on Tuesday, December 24, 2013 and will be closing at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31, 2013.

In addition, the Library will be extending its hours, beginning in January 2014. They will now be open on Tuesdays and Thursday beginning at 9:00 a.m., rather than 10:00 a.m., adding two hours per week that they will be open to the public.

- 3.2. New Police Officer Introductions/Swearing-In Ceremonies** – Acting Deputy Police Chief Kris Kelley introduced new patrol officers Jeremy Breton and Denise Parker. Next, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Denise Gonyer conducted their swearing in ceremony, followed by Acting Deputy Police Chief Kelley pinning on their new badges. The Board congratulated both officers on their new appointments.

- 4. Review/Approval of Minutes**

- 4.1.** Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the minutes of December 4, 2013, as presented. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

5. Consent Agenda

5.1. Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the previously signed items for the period December 2, 2013 through December 13, 2013, as listed. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

<u>DOCUMENT DATE</u>	<u>DOCUMENT</u>	<u>MAP/LOT #</u>
11/21/13	Accounts Payable Manifest	
11/25/13	Payroll Register(2)	
11/26/13	Accounts Payable Manifest	
11/27/13	Payroll Register	
12/02/13	Payroll Register(2)	
12/02/13	Abatement - Ferreira	204-069.000
12/03/13	Accounts Payable Manifest	
12/03/13	Payroll Register	
12/04/13	2014 Tax Map Maintenance Contract - Cartographics	
12/04/13	Boat Agent Appointment - Irwin Marine/MVYC	
12/04/13	Appointment Form - Breton	
12/04/13	Tax Collector's Warrant - 2013 Sewer Rents	
12/08/13	Change of Status - Breton	

6. Public Hearing

6.1 Utility Pole License Amendments – Chairman Hayes proceeded to read aloud the public hearing notice and opened the hearing for public comment. Hearing none, Chairman Hayes closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

Selectman O'Brien moved to grant the Petition to Amend Existing Pole Licenses and the Agreements to use the public rights-of-way. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

7. Appointments

7.1 Belknap County Commissioners – Board of Commissioners Chairman John Thomas was in attendance to review the 2014 Belknap County budget with the Selectmen. Also in attendance was County Administrator Debra Shackett. Commissioner Thomas indicated that they made substantial cuts to the budgets submitted by various departments, without having to lay off any employees. He provided an overview of the two handouts he presented to Board members. In addition to not having any layoffs, the County has not created any new positions, although it has become increasingly difficult to be able to continue to provide the same level of services as costs continue to rise.

Chairman Thomas then reviewed several graphs he provided showing expenditures and fund balance. He pointed out that 2013 expenditures are on par with 2008. In addition, he described the ongoing problem with fund balance levels, which have rapidly declined since 2011. Unfortunately, the decline in fund balance affects the County's credit rating and ability to borrow money.

The amount of money to be raised by taxes will increase more than 4% over last year and Chairman Thomas reiterated the difficulty the County is facing by trying to maintain services and increase the fund balance. As far as LRMFA is concerned, this is no longer being funded through the County tax and, as a result, has decreased their appropriation for outside agencies by \$533,000. Each municipality will be billed directly for this cost.

Chairman Thomas then reviewed some of the other factors affecting the increase in the tax rate, including a \$100,000 surveillance system, higher personnel costs and additional cruisers for the Sheriff's Department. The Jail Planning Committee continues to meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month and a bond issue is being considered to hire an architect to do a schematic design, replace the HVAC system and purchase a temporary housing unit to ease overcrowding and create program space. He stressed that the current facility is equally unsafe for both inmates and employees.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the need to reduce the recidivism rate in the jail. County Administrator Shackett added that another factor in the increase in the County tax rate is a \$230,000 increase the amount paid to NH Health & Human Services for care for the elderly. Chairman Thomas also advised the Board that the County government has been reorganized and is currently, as closely as possible, modeled like a business.

7.2 Geoff Ruggles – Financial Update – Director Ruggles stated that revenues were down approximately \$16,000 during the month of November, compared to last year, although overall they continue to track by roughly \$445,000 more year to date over 2012 levels. Expenditures continue to track well within budget and Director Ruggles anticipates a budget surplus of approximately \$150,000 at the end of the year. Property tax collections were down in November, most likely due to the late tax rate setting and bills being sent out.

The Board thanked Director Ruggles for his update.

8. Old Business

8.1 Conservation Commission – Gage Property Acquisition – Conservation Commission member Doug Hill stated that they have been working on this project for ten years. This property is 331 acres and is a key piece in the Belknap Range Trail System. The entire section of unbroken conservation land is now over 7,000 acres and the conservation easement guarantees perpetual public access.

Doug Hill further stated that \$110,000 has been earmarked from the Conservation Fund for this property. He added that there will be virtually no impact on tax revenue because the land is in current use.

Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the acquisition of a conservation easement, by the Conservation Commission, for the Gage property. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

8.2 Police Department Fixed Radar Sign Report – Acting Deputy Police Chief Kelley stated that in response to a request at the last meeting, he has compiled some information regarding this proposed purchase. He further stated that most of the units are quite similar in how they work and their effectiveness. Both of the units he received pricing on have positives and negatives to them, such as fixed or the ability to move and battery operated or hard-wired.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding which type of unit should be purchased, and

Acting Deputy Chief Kelley stated that the Department would be able to work with which ever unit is purchased, but is recommending the purchase of the TC-400 model. It was pointed out that data collection software would be available for an additional \$325 on either model.

Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the purchase of a Marlin Controls Unit (fixed) TC-500A, in the amount of \$4,425, including the data collection software. Selectman Benavides indicated that he would not be supporting this motion because he would like to have the ability to move the unit around. Chairman Hayes seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 2-1 with Selectman Benavides voting no.

8.3 2013 Budget Transfers – Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the transfer of funds, in the total amount of \$161,000, as listed in the memorandum dated December 16, 2013 from Finance Director Ruggles. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

8.4 FY2014 Budget and Annual Town Meeting Warrant – Town Administrator Dunn advised the Board that the revised budget amount now reflects the correct figure for property liability insurance. He also reminded them that the Budget Committee included a stipend for the Board of Selectmen and Moderator in the 2014 budget. Chairman Hayes stated that he would like to hold off on recommending a final budget amount until after the Budget Committee has completed their review.

Town Administrator Dunn pointed out that the figure of \$13,116,173 also includes approximately \$1,600 in costs for the unanticipated election that will occur in January 2014. Following further discussion, the Board concurred to carry forward the figure of \$13,124,893, which also includes stipends for the Selectmen and Moderator.

Selectman O'Brien moved to approve Articles 13-31 of the 2014 Town Meeting Warrant, as drafted. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

8.5 Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Membership Application/Agreement – Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the document and authorize the Town Administrator to sign. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

8.6 Governor's Island Sewer – Chairman Hayes stated that this was placed on the agenda at his request. He further stated that Governor's Island is the last stretch of shorefront from Alton to Meredith that does not have sewer. He indicated that this matter has been studied in the past, but technology has significantly advanced since that time. He asked Board members to authorize Requests for Qualifications from engineers to develop a cost. This would be the first step in a very lengthy process.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons that have been expressed by residents in having sewers installed. Residents who are opposed do not want this additional cost, and/or the disruption that would occur during construction. Chairman Hayes reiterated that advances in technology include better pumping stations and pressure pipe. He also expressed concern with the possible degradation of the Lake with failed septic systems.

Town Administrator Dunn recommended that the residents of Governor's Island be invited to participate in this process. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of writing a letter to their Association, advising them of the Board's action.

Mike Brien of Edgewater Drive asked about who would be paying for any bond issuance for this construction. Finance Director Ruggles responded that the last bond on Cherry Valley Road was approximately a 50/50 split between the affected residents and taxpayers of Gilford. Mr. Brien stated that many Governor's Island residents have invested considerable money into their septic systems, which are working fine. He added that, under State law, septic systems would have to be filled in with concrete or sand. Mr. Brien stated that in a letter written to him last year by Town Administrator Dunn, he indicated that the entire betterment cost would be borne by the residents of Governor's Island and not the rest of the taxpayers. This is in direct contrast with what was just stated regarding any bond issuance.

The Board concurred to move forward with the Request for Qualification.

9. New Business

9.1 Vincent Drive "NO SALT" Petition – Chairman Hayes suggested trying it for a month with no salt being used on Vincent Drive, before the Board formally acts on the petition. He asked Director Morgan to provide a report at the second meeting in January regarding the status of the road during snowstorms without any salt being used.

9.2 Street Name Assignment – Smith Farm Road – Selectman O'Brien moved to approve and sign the Return of Street Name Assignment as presented. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

9.3 Proposed Permissible Fireworks Ordinance – The Board concurred with Chairman Hayes to place this matter on the January 8, 2014 agenda for further comment. Town Administrator Dunn asked Board members to forward their proposed changes to him and in addition, he would need to have the document undergo a legal review.

9.4 Acceptance of Gift – Police Officer James Callahan received a \$50 gift card from Bessie Kafanelis of Pizza Express, for her appreciation of how he handled a recent motor vehicle stop. Selectman O'Brien stated that he is opposed to the acceptance of this gift, while Selectman Benavides moved to authorize acceptance of the \$50 gift for Officer Callahan. There being no second to the motion, the motion did not go forward.

9.5 Appointments to Police Chief Search Committee – Selectman O'Brien moved to appoint the following residents of the Town of Gilford to the Police Chief Search Committee: Paul Ardizzoni, Thomas Drouin, Stephen Hodges, Kimberly Lacasse, Kathleen Merriam, Robert Pelland and Larry Routhier. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

9.6 Investment and Credit Card Policies – Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the Investment Policy as presented. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the Credit Card Security and Processing Policy and to designate Town Administrator Scott Dunn as the Security Officer. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

- 10.0 Other Business** – Town Administrator Dunn requested that the Board approve Change Order #1 for the Town Hall improvements, which consists of the purchase of 45 sheets of plywood, totaling \$6,120. Selectman O'Brien moved to approve Change Order #1 for the Town Hall improvements. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Town Administrator Dunn stated that the replacement of lighting fixtures was not included in the contract for Town Hall improvements. Selectman O'Brien moved to approve the purchase of replacement lighting for the Town Hall, in the amount of \$739.34, to be withdrawn from the Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. Selectman Benavides seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Town Administrator Dunn reported that a vacancy exists in the Finance Office for a part-time Accounting Clerk position and he is seeking authorization from the Board to proceed with advertising the position. The Board concurred with this request.

- 11.0 Public Input** – none.

- 12.0 Selectmen's Issues** – none.

- 13.0 Administrator's Report** – The current cable television franchise agreement expires on December 31, 2013 and there is no new agreement in place at this time. Under Federal law, the existing agreement remains status quo and in effect.

Town Hall improvements are proceeding, although they are running slightly behind schedule.

- 14.0 Next Meeting** – Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall

- 15.0 Adjournment** – With no further business before the Board, the Board of Selectmen's December 18, 2013 meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gus Benavides
Clerk