

**TOWN OF GILFORD  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
January 10, 2017  
6:30 PM**

Members present: Timothy Sullivan, Sean Murphy, Harry Bean, Richard Grenier (Selectman Alternate), Norman Silber, Geoffrey Ruggles, Karen Thurston (School Board Alternate) Susan Greene, and S. Peter Karagianis.

Members absent: Kevin Leandro, Dale Channing Eddy, Dr. Leslie Suranyi Jr. and Chris McDonough.

Chairman Norman Silber called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 6:30 PM and Richard Grenier led the assembly with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Gunstock Acres Village Water District (GAVWD) Budget: Chairman Silber said he has heard from Howard Epstein on behalf of the GAVWD. Mr. Epstein will present their budget at the public hearing on 01/12/17 after the Town budget and before the School budget.

Approval of minutes: Norman Silber made a motion to approve the 01/05/2017 minutes as written; Karen Thurston made a change on page four; the residents name is Beth Devivo (not Betsey); seconded by Sean Murphy; motion passes; (6-0-3). (G. Ruggles, R. Grenier and K. Thurston abstained)

School District Budget and cost items associated with the teachers union contract: Chairman Silber reviewed that Articles number 4 and 5 were tabled at the last meeting so the Budget Committee (Chairman Silber) could review the supporting documentation and come up with a bottom line budget number for the School. Mr. Silber carefully reviewed the GSD Counter Proposal, the teacher's union contract and the school budget. Costs for year one of the contract equal \$296,819. Chairman Silber stated that there has been a declining enrollment for the last several years; add that to the cost per student of \$21,000 to \$22,000 plus the 13.4% health insurance increase that is a lot of money to ask of the taxpayers. Chairman Silber handed out a printout he obtained from the New Hampshire Employment Security website which shows average wages for this area. Mr. Silber went on to point out how many staff members are over \$100,000 in wages and concluded with stating that in his opinion these contract increases were outrageous. Sue Allen, School Board member has a daughter who is a teacher; Mr. Silber felt that is a conflict. Mr. Silber asked Kirk Beitler if there was a conflict policy. Mr. Beitler answered no, not to his knowledge. Norman Silber made a motion to NOT recommend approval of Article 4; seconded by Harry Bean. Discussion ensued. Sean Murphy asked for

point of order. He said that they would need to un-table this matter first before they vote, Chairman Silber confirmed that is correct and made a motion to un-table, seconded by Sean Murphy and passed with all in favor; (9-0) Norman Silber went back to his motion not to recommend and opened discussion for public input. Skip Murphy spoke in favor of the Budget Committees petition to put them in charge of the Schools default budget as he feels that the School Board is out of control and working for the teachers and not the taxpayers; Mr. Joe Wernig spoke to the fact he moved here years ago for the school system, has been here for 29 years and is a middle school teacher. He feels it is about quality not the bottom line. Ms. Carol Young Podmore stated that when schools are good, it makes property more valuable in return. She appreciated and respected Sean Murphy for visiting her classroom yesterday to spend some time learning/educating himself in order to make informed decisions. Mr. Silber closed the public comments portion. Committee discussion ensued and Mr. Silber called the vote and reiterated the motion is to NOT recommend approval of Article 4 – Multi-Year Agreement; motion passes; (5-4)

Article 5 – Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items: Superintendent of Schools Kirk Beitler said that this article is on hold. They have one more meeting to go through the budget process and negotiations to try and get approved. There will be a special meeting of the School Board, then it will go to the Budget Committee and then to voters (Special Town Meeting). Peter Karagianis reiterated for his clarification that the School Board will go back and open the contract and re-negotiate and then come back to the Budget Committee and then to the voters and asked what the time line is for this. Mr. Beitler answered June 30, 2017.


School Budget Bottom line operating budget: Norman Silber made a motion to vote for \$25,903,694 as the bottom line budget number; seconded by Harry Bean. Discussion ensued. Geoffrey Ruggles as a point of order said he is not sure the budget committee can do the DRA form as a bottom line number as they have specific line items that need to be filled out. Superintendent Beitler concurred that the MS-27 form is required. Chairman Silber said if they could supply the form, he would fill it out for the final number for line items. Chairman Silber asked for public input. Mr. Joe Wernig spoke about not simply focusing on the bottom line number; Ms. Deb Laliberte said that some budget committee members should educate themselves on how the process works instead of their own agenda; they are supposed to represent all taxpayers; Mr. Skip Murphy spoke in support of the budget number. Chairman Silber closed public input and called the vote; Motion passes; (6-3).

Public Hearing announcement: Superintendent Kirk Beitler announced that there would be a public hearing on February 13, 2017 at 6:00 pm at Gilford High School on the petition warrant article which reads *“Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:14 b to delegate the determination*

*of the default budget to the municipal budget committee which has been adopted under RSA 32:14?" and that it requires a 3/5 majority vote. He invited all to attend.*

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, ,

  
Angela Bovill, Executive Assistant