

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE
Town/GAVWD/School Budget Public Hearing
January 12, 2017
7:00 PM
Held at the Gilford High School
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members Present: Chairman Norman Silber, Timothy Sullivan, Peter Karagianis, Kevin Leandro, Richard Grenier, Dr. Leslie Suranyi Jr., Susan Greene, Chris McDonough, Harry Bean and Sean Murphy.

Members Absent: Geoffrey Ruggles and Dale Channing Eddy.

Chairman Norman Silber called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Silber welcomed members of the public and introduced the Budget Committee. He explained the order of business this evening will be: 1. Town Budget, 2. Gunstock Acres Village Water District (GAVWD) Budget and 3. School Budget.

Chairman Silber opened the public hearing at 7:03 and Town Administrator Scott Dunn gave a detailed overview on the Town Budget stating that the Budget Committee concurred with the Board of Selectmen's recommendations and a total amount to be raised by taxes of \$8,685,358 which is a decrease of \$173,571 (1.96%) from 2016.

Town Administrator Scott Dunn discussed Warrant Article #9, for the Selectmen to enter into a purchase and sales agreement five year lease for a new for fire engine. Administrator Dunn explained how the Town had to restructure the way that this will be funded based on the RSA and the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) requirements pertaining to lease purchase agreements with a non-appropriation clause. The DRA will not allow the first payment to come from a Capital Reserve Fund; they will allow it for the last payment. The Selectmen discussed this at their 01/11/2017 meeting and concurred that they would make the first years down payment (2017) of \$50,000 using surplus fund balance and the last payment of \$200,000 will come from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. (This will have no impact on the tax rate). Chris McDonough asked about years two, three and four; these will be town meeting appropriations. Chairman Silber then opened the meeting up for public input on Article #9 at 7:10 pm. There was no public comment and the public input was closed at 7:11 pm. Kevin Leandro made a motion to approve and recommend Article #9 as presented; seconded by Sean Murphy and passed with all in favor; (10-0).

Town Administrator Scott Dunn then asked the Budget Committee to reconsider their vote to not approve Article #11, Phase 2 of the Town Hall Improvements Project. Administrator Dunn explained based on the input from some of the Budget Committee members on their displeasure with the two HVAC estimates; he had another company come in to provide a quote. This one came in at \$200,000 half the price of the two previous quotes of approximately \$400,000. Administrator Dunn said he is unsure of the differences in quotes but has a new level of confidence that the project could be done for under \$400,000 and explained in detail what this project entails. Town Administrator Dunn asked the Budget Committee to go back to the original \$450,000 budget number to do all the projects that the Town intended to do in 2017. Chris McDonough said he would support if the cost for the total project was reduced by \$200,000 as he feels that is plenty. Discussion ensued. Chairman Silber then opened the

meeting up for public input on Article #11 at 7:27 pm. There was no public comment and the public input was closed at 7:28 pm; no further action was taken.

Town Administrator Scott Dunn explained Article #20 came as a petition just prior to the January 10 deadline and that there would not be a warrant for New Beginnings based on incomplete petition warrant or for Community Central VNA hospice due to the fact that one was not submitted. Chairman Silber read Article #20 for the record (\$21,000 in support of Genesis Behavioral Health and stated that historically the Budget committee does not recommend these articles but rather leaves it up to the voters to decide. (The Board of Selectmen practices that same). Chairman Silber opened the meeting for public comment at 7:31 PM. Ms. Anne Nichols, resident and Executive Director of Genesis Behavioral Health explained what services this funding provides and the requirements for Genesis that they are mandated to provide. Budget Committee members asked Ms. Nichols various questions on funding, Emergency Mental Health Services at LRGHealthcare, other funding and donation resources to name a few. Ms. Lauren Cooper, resident and ER Physician spoke in support of Article #20. Discussion ensued. Kevin Leandro made a motion to recommend Article #20; seconded by Chris McDonough; motion fails; (2-8)

At 7:45 pm, Chairman Silber closed the Town portion of the public budget hearing and opened up the public hearing to Gunstock Acres Village Water District to present their budget.

Mr. Howard Epstein representing the Gunstock Acres Village Water District presented their budget request. Mr. Epstein explained that the GAVWD is self funded and that their budget does not have an effect on the Gilford taxpayers. Mr. Epstein gave each member of the budget committee a copy of their budget request for FY2017 of \$375,584. Discussion ensued. There was no public comment. Norman Silber made a motion to approve the GAVWD budget for \$375,584 as presented and reiterated it has no tax impact on the voters; seconded by Sean Murphy and passed with all in favor; (10-0).

At 7:49 pm Chairman Silber closed the GAVWD portion of the public hearing and opened up the public hearing to the Gilford School District to present their budget.

Superintendent Kirk Beitler introduced himself and began review of the 2017-2018 School Board Proposed Budget Summary starting with page one summarizing the current budget of \$25,725,629, the School Boards proposed budget of \$26,019,631, the budget committees proposed budget of \$25,903,694 and lastly the school boards default budget of \$25,872,143 (difference of \$31,551 between the default budget and the Budget Committees proposed budget). Superintendent Beitler went on to review the changes made by the Budget Committee to arrive at their total for the default budget. Superintendent Beitler went through the numbers to explain the \$31,551 dollar difference. Lengthy discussions ensued on the default budget. Mr. Fred Butler, resident asked for point of order stating the default budget doesn't make a difference in tonight's public hearing. Chairman Silber overruled Mr. Butler and continued review of the budget numbers ending with estimated revenues which Assistant Superintendent for Business, Scott Isabelle explained to the committee in detail and answered questions.

Chairman Silber moved onto the School District Warrant Articles starting with Article #2, General Budget Funds and read for the record. Chairman Silber indicated there is no School Board recommendation on this article; that is because they have not met yet to vote.

Article #3 Multi-Year Agreement is relative to the cost items associated with the contract between the Gilford School District and the Gilford Education Association; Chairman Silber read

for the record. Kevin Leandro was not present at the 01/10/17 meeting and said in his opinion this was the largest contract increase he has ever seen; \$1.6 million over 3 years is not sustainable to the taxpayer. He feels that everyone deserves a raise, but that it needs to be more equitable. Timothy Sullivan also pointed out that the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) contribution rates just went up again. Chairman Silber opened for public input at 8:13 pm. Mr. David Horvath asked for a breakdown of taxpayer impact which Superintendent Beitler provided. Mr. Horvath was concerned about who negotiated from the School Board. Discussion ensued. Chris McDonough explained that the School Board increased employees' contribution to Health Insurance premiums was increased to 10% over three years. With no further comments, Chairman Silber closed public comments at 8:21 pm.

Chairman Silber stated Social Security has had no increase and provided a document for the public to research household income statistics per capita for the Town of Gilford along with statistics for the District's schools including the continual decrease in student enrollment to name a few. Chairman Silber went on to discuss how last year the voters rejected the School Boards proposed budget and voted to approve the School Boards default budget which did not include raises. Mr. Silber also expressed in length his opinion regarding a no conflict policy, teacher salaries and benefits package, especially those in excess of over \$100,000 (he feels there is a wage decompression) and the cost per student in Gilford.

Chairman Silber read Article #4; no Budget Committee vote is required.

Chairman Silber read Article #5 School Buildings Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund for \$75,000 and asked if there was any public input. There was none.

Chairman Silber read Article #6 School Buildings Roof Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund for \$62,500 and asked if there was any public input. There was none.

Chairman Silber read Article #7 School Buildings Technology Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund for \$30,000 and asked if there was any public input. There was none.

Chairman Silber read Article #8 Citizen Petition "*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?*" Superintendent Beitler announced that there will be a public hearing on this February 13, 2017 at 6:00 pm followed by a vote and for all interested to attend.

Chairman Silber asked if there were any other public comments on the budget. There were none.

With no further business to discuss, the Public Hearing meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Bovill, Executive Assistant