**TOWN OF GILFORD**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 17, 2023**

**7:00 PM**

**GILFORD HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

Budget Committee Members present: Chair David Tyler, Valerie Chase, Johnna-Dee Davis, Kyle Sanborn, Johan Andersen, Amber LaTorre, Angelo Farruggia, Gaye Fedorchak, Stephen Hepburn, Dorothy Piquado and Gus Benavides

Mr. Tyler called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the assembly with the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of two local community members who had recently passed away.

Mr. Tyler said he was going to change the order of the hearings as posted to start with the Gunstock Acres Village Water District.

GAVWD budget information was presented in the form of a worksheet showing the 2021 Budget and estimated revenues, 2021 Actual Expenditures and receipts, 2022 Budget and estimated revenues, 2022 Actual Expenditures and receipts and the proposed 2023 Budget with estimated revenues along with a draft MS-737 Form. Budget summaries were given by Rich Haidul and Commissioner Joe Garaci that noted the total budget was $826,570, of which $217,000 would come from village district taxes.

Ms. Fedorchak asked for confirmation that user fees would double from $440 per year to $880 per year and this was confirmed.

Following additional questions and discussion by Budget Committee members and people in the audience, Mr. Tyler made a motion to approve and recommend the Gunstock Acres Village Water District 2023 Budget in the amount of $826,570, seconded by Mr. Farruggia and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

The Town budget was presented in the form of a worksheet showing the 2022 Budget and revenue estimates, 2022 Actual Expenditures and receipts, 2023 Budget requests and estimated revenues, 2023 Budget recommendations and estimated revenues and the 2023 Default Budget along with a draft of all warrant articles.

Town Administrator Dunn noted the Board of Selectmen had removed the previous funding request and warrant article for a $1 million bond to build a new bathhouse and replaced it with a new article 6 in the amount of $100,000 to be deposited into a capital reserve fund for a new bathhouse. He said the Budget Committee would need to vote on that new article 6 and four petition warrant articles (#23-26).

There was a lengthy discussion on the proposed article 6, with Mr. Farruggia indicating his opposition to spending any money on design of a new facility – he said this can be done for free by any lumber supply yard.

Ms. Fedorchak said the Selectmen had acted responsibly to take a step back following the input received at a public hearing and she had faith in their ability to oversee this project with the money being requested.

Mr. Tyler made a motion for the Budget Committee to make a recommendation on Article 6, seconded by Mr. Farruggia. He then called for a show of hands by those members in favor of the article and 8 members voted to recommend, followed by a show of hands by those members opposed to the article with 3 members voting not to recommend; (Mr. Tyler, Mr. Farruggia and Mr. Sanborn).

Mr. Tyler made a motion to recommend Article 23 as written to provide $10,000 to Community Action Program of Belknap-Merrimack Counties, seconded by Mr. Farruggia and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Mr. Tyler made a motion to recommend Article 24 as written to provide $2,660 to New Beginnings without Violence and Abuse, seconded by Mr. Farruggia and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Mr. Tyler made a motion to recommend Article 25 as written to provide $24,000 to Granite VNA, seconded by Ms. Fedorchak and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Mr. Sanborn made a motion to recommend Article 26 as written to provide $21,000 to Lakes Region Mental Health Center, seconded by Mr. Farruggia and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Mr. Dunn noted the 2023 Town budget recommendations as approved by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee were estimated to result in a 2.5% percent municipal tax rate increase with a change in the municipal portion of the tax rate from $4.14 to $4.25.

The School budget was presented in the form of a handout showing the FY 2022-2023 Budget, FY 2023-2024 Budget recommendations and the FY 2023-2024 Default Budget along with the budget amounts being requested for two special warrant articles.

Mr. Tyler noted the Budget Committee and School Board had unanimously agreed on all budget amounts being presented.

Fed Butler asked why $15,000 had been taken out of the School Budget for youth basketball hoops.

Mr. Sanborn said the School Board felt that money was not needed and could be raised by donations if necessary.

Mr. Butler encouraged the School Board to reconsider adding that money back into the budget and he said the existing hoop situation for young children has some safety issues. Parks & Recreation Director Herb Greene explained some of the challenges associated with the current “hoops” situation.

Mr. Tyler then asked if there was anyone in the audience who had any questions or comments about the budgets that were presented, but no one spoke.

With no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Andersen thanked everyone for coming and made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm, seconded by Mr. Tyler and passed with all in favor; (11-0).

Respectfully submitted,

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Scott J. Dunn, Town Administrator

Approved by the Budget Committee on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2023; ATTEST:

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David Tyler, Chair