

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 18, 2006

6:30 p.m.

Gilford Town Hall

Members Present: Doug Lambert, Skip Murphy, Bill Phillips, Phyllis Corrigan, John O'Brien, Bob Brent, Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Tom Walter, Derek Tomlinson, Sean Murphy and Connie Grant.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok stated that this meeting was convened for two reasons:

1. Requests from Committee members regarding the status of the 2006 budget.
2. Housekeeping items to clarify Budget Committee procedures.

Town Administrator Juris and Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Director Shackett proceeded to present a PowerPoint Presentation of the 2006 budget, as well as an explanation of various line items. Beginning with General Government, Town Administrator Juris informed Budget Committee members that the over-expenditure under "Part Time Wages" is due to the hiring of an intern from Gilford High School to work on various projects. He also pointed out that under "Recruitment", this line item is over-expended due to the advertisements necessary for recruiting a new Parks and Recreation Director.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett then provided an explanation of the difference between "adjustment" and "encumbrance". She also advised the Committee members that new software enables them to post purchase orders against the budget, in addition to actual payments. This is beneficial in knowing how much money is committed to a specific line item.

The next category covered was Public Safety. Town Administrator Juris informed the Budget Committee that he was not prepared to make any further comments on the Fire Department's budget and also wanted to make it clear that their budget is not in an emergency situation. He further stated that the Fire Department's budget issues will be discussed further at the June 14, 2006 Selectmen's meeting.

Town Administrator Juris also elaborated on the issue of forest fire expenditures and reimbursement and the call company payroll line item. He further stated it is recommended that the call company currently institute a hiring freeze for any new personnel. He then stated that he was not prepared to further discuss the call company, because this would be further reviewed by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Fire Engineers.

Town Administrator Juris then briefly reviewed the situation with Engine 1, which is out of service indefinitely. Chairman Hickok stated that he would be interested in knowing how many times Engine 1 is used per year. Discussion ensued with Doug Lambert inquiring about leasing a new fire truck. Town Administrator Juris stated that there is nothing official on a replacement for Engine 1 and the Fire Department should be here to discuss these issues.

Gilford resident Jack McDevitt brought up the issue of a Master Plan for vehicle replacement and provided a brief history of Engine 1. He also stated that he feels that Engine 1 is rarely used. At this time, Town Administrator Juris once again stated that any detailed discussion of the Fire Department's budget or equipment should be done with Chief Hayes present. Doug Lambert then asked about leasing again. Town Administrator Juris replied that there has been no formal request for any type of lease and/or replacement of Engine 1. Chairman Hickok agreed that any detailed discussion regarding the Fire Department should not take place at this meeting, since it was convened as a budget status meeting.

Bill Phillips asked that the Committee move on with the budget review. Town Administrator Juris then proceeded with a brief overview of the Highways and Streets budget. Under Vehicle Maintenance, he described problems with Truck 12's filtering system and relayed how Ford was very generous in absorbing a portion of the bill.

Under Capital Outlay, Town Administrator Juris indicated that the Police Department has been informed that they must absorb the over-expenditure Building Addition. Under Sewer Department, he provided an explanation on the cost under Meters, System Upgrade.

Next, Assistant Town Administrator Shackett reviewed the status of revenues for 2006. Derek Tomlinson inquired about town-owned property, which prompted a brief discussion on the process for disposing of town-owned property.

After completing the budget review, Chairman Hickok stated that he would like to have a discussion with other Committee members regarding sub-committees. Doug Lambert stated that he has a concern with the sub-committees. He then proceeded to distribute copies of RSA 32 and 91-A to other Committee members. He further stated that he learned a great deal about the budget at tonight's meeting and he likes the group review. John O'Brien stated that he feels the Budget Committee sub-committees are in compliance with NH Statutes. Phyllis Corrigan stated that she is confused over the issue of sub-committees, which prompted extensive discussion.

Doug Lambert then moved that the method of Budget Committee review would

be to hold two meetings prior to the budget season for the purpose of this review – one in July to study the town budget and a second in mid- to late September to study the town and school. Bob Brent seconded. Derek Tomlinson stated that this meeting has had no real value to him. John O'Brien suggested that the budget report could be made available to Committee members periodically.

Phyllis Corrigan stated that the Gilford Budget Committee meets more than any other Budget Committee in the area. Chairman Hickok then called for a show of hands on the motion – with 3 members voting yes the motion was defeated. Chairman Hickok reiterated John O'Brien's suggestion to provide budget updates to members.

Skip Murphy suggested that the budget updates could be posted on the Town's website. Doug Lambert seconded. Motion carried. At this time, Town Administrator Juris clarified that it is not the Budget Committee's prerogative what information is placed on the website. He further stated that he is willing to provide whatever information the Budget Committee would like, but policy is set by the Board of Selectmen.

Extensive discussion ensued on fiscal sub-committees. Sue Greene moved to continue the current practice with fiscal sub-committees for the Town and School District. John O'Brien seconded. After more discussion, the motion carried. Members of the fiscal sub-committee for the School District budget are Skip Murphy and Phyllis Corrigan. Members of the fiscal sub-committee for the Town budget are John O'Brien, Sue Greene and Doug Lambert.

Chairman Hickok stated that he would like to meet in September prior to the budget process regarding salary and wage data. He feels that it would be beneficial to see how Gilford wages and benefits compare to other towns in the area.

Bob Brent moved to create a sub-committee to study salary and wage data. Sue Greene seconded. Motion carried. Members of the Data sub-committee are John O'Brien, Skip Murphy, Bob Brent and Dick Hickok.

The Budget Committee briefly discussed the issue of communication. Chairman Hickok stated that Budget Committee members should not be speaking or writing on behalf of the Budget Committee, only as individuals. The Budget Committee concurred with this.

Chairman Hickok asked Budget Committee members to provide their addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses so that current information would be available.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Secretary