

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 12, 2006

6:30 p.m.

Gilford Town Hall

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

Members Absent: Paul Blandford

Also in attendance were Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett and Administrative Secretary Sandra Bailey.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok asked Library Sub-committee members Sue Greene and Sean Murphy to review their findings for the Budget Committee. Sue Greene proceeded to review the comment sheet that was provided as a result of the work session with the Library. She stated that the budget for the Library generally appears to be in order, but did have some concerns under the Discretionary Spending portion, which includes Equipment and Maintenance and Library Maintenance.

Selectmen Grant advised the Committee that the Board of Selectmen has changed their recommendation on the Library carpeting. They have decided not to recommend it. Brief discussion ensued on painting the exterior of the Library.

When the matter of salaries came up, Committee members were reminded that this portion of the Library budget is to be discussed under the Administration Budget.

Concern was expressed regarding programs for young children. Library Director Dormody stated that the both she and the Library Trustees feel very strongly about these programs. She pointed out that much of these programs is handled by volunteers.

Discussion again ensued on the matter of salaries. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett explained again why this should be discussed on the Administration Budget.

Committee members asked Library Director Dormody several questions regarding audio/visual materials, travel expense and their computers. In addition to responding to these inquiries, she also provided an explanation of a new category called "Downloadables".

Library Trustee Bill Seed made a brief statement concerning salaries. He encouraged Committee members to consider the performance based salaries, rather than salaries based on ratings. He invited Committee members to visit the Library.

Skip Murphy asked for a breakdown of various materials. Library Director Dormody will provide this information.

The Budget Committee then began discussion on Outside Agencies. Selectman Grant provided a brief overview of how these budget items have been handled in the past. Chairman

Hickok expressed concern with whether or not the agencies have helped Gilford residents, but advised Committee members that the voters have typically supported them.

Extensive discussion ensued on tax dollars going to outside agencies. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett stated that many towns face the same dilemma as Gilford. She provided an explanation of how other towns have handled the matter of funding outside agencies.

A request was made for more information on the Red Cross. This information will be provided next week.

Questions were raised on the Welfare line item. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett explained the situation with a new Welfare Director, and how this will help to decrease the amount of aid provided.

Brief discussion ensued on making the outside agency funding an individual warrant article for each organization. Chairman Hickok cautioned about making the warrant too long. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett advised the Committee that they can make a recommendation, but it is the Board of Selectmen who generates the warrant.

Phyllis Corrigan stated that she has a scheduling problem with being able to meet individually with the Fire and Police Departments prior to next week's meeting. After extensive discussion, John O'Brien moved to schedule the Police Department working group to November 2, 2006. Doug Lambert seconded. Motion carried.

John O'Brien moved to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2006 meeting with the following corrections:

1. On page one, paragraph 8, change "Budget Committee" to "Department Managers".
2. On page two, paragraph 5, change "Town Administrator Juris is concerned that some members of the Budget Committee are coming into the budget process in an adversarial position" to "Town Administrator Juris is concerned that the tone of the meeting became adversarial".

Sean Murphy seconded. Motion carried. Phyllis Corrigan abstained.

Chairman Hickok expressed concern with the Budget Committee schedule. He is concerned with dates in January. He would like to add January 4, 2007 to "Prepare for public hearing (Town and School) and have January 11, 2007 designated for the School's Public Hearing.

Chairman Hickok stated that he would like to provide some input to Committee members on the budget process and role of the Budget Committee. This prompted extensive discussion on the matter of salaries. Chairman Hickok reiterated his position that salaries should not be discussed every week. He also reminded Committee members that their role is to talk about dollar amounts, not employee performance. Comments were also made regarding health insurance benefits.

The possibility of sending a letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding COLA was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Secretary