

## **GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**October 25, 2007**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Gilford Town Hall**

Members Present: Doug Lambert, Skip Murphy, John O'Brien, Bob Brent, Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Bill Phillips, Margo Weeks, Gus Benavides, Dale Dormody, Phyllis Corrigan, and Terry Stewart

Members Absent: None

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Evans Juris, Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett and Recording Secretary Melinda Ferreira.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to the meeting to discuss the 2008 budget. He stated this night's meeting would elaborate on the Administration Sub-Committee's review of the Administration budget. He then turned the meeting over to Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett, who passed out three items which included a Schedule, Capital Improvement Plan and latest revised copy of the total budget.

Phyllis Corrigan inquired as to being able to obtain a list of Budget Committee members including their telephone numbers. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett replied that could be obtained.

Highlights of the changes to the Administration budget as explained by Assistant Town Administrator Shackett included the Laconia Water appropriation, which was increased due to the inclusion of thirteen additional fire hydrants. Doug Lambert inquired as to why there were additional hydrants. Town Administrator Juris explained the hydrants, as well as a quarterly fee per hydrant, and per foot fee were required. Six hydrants in Wesley Woods were privately funded; but the Town will have to pay for the maintenance.

Discussion ensued on an Impact Fee and Wesley Woods not being fully taxed. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett explained that Wesley Woods, as they stood now, qualified as a tax exempt entity and the fact that they agreed to make a Payment In Lieu of Taxes to the Town was a very good thing.

Another change to the budget was under Personnel Administration, in which Health & Dental Insurance increases were discussed. Both were still below last years numbers, but rose due to an increase in the guaranteed maximum premiums. Health Insurance rose up to a 13 ½% guaranteed maximum premium and the Dental Insurance premium will be up 2.6%.

Moving onto the Administration Sub-Committee review, Skip Murphy, Terry Stewart and Dick Hickok had previously met with Town Administrator Juris and Assistant Town Administrator Shackett. A worksheet was passed out to the Board with the Sub-Committee's recommendations. Discussion ensued over the outcome of the workgroup. The Sub-Committee had broken up the line items into discretionary and non-discretionary groups.

Doug Lambert inquired as to the Retirement System situation. Assistant Town Administrator

Shackett explained that Municipal Managers, along with Fire and Police Unions, had gotten together and created a list of action items. Recommendations were made at this meeting and State Legislature seems to be listening.

The level of service provided by the NH Humane Society and alternatives were then discussed and it was explained by Assistant Town Administrator Shackett that the Town of Gilford was paying substantially less than other communities.

In regards to a new Town copier, Bob Brent asked about the differences between leasing vs. purchasing a new administrative copier. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett replied that there was no financial advantage to leasing.

Under Capital Reserves, Recreational Facility Maintenance projects were spread out over three years to rebuild the Village Field playground, maintain tennis courts, and replace roofs and so on. This first year included a new swing set and surface, slide and rockers. Doug Lambert and Terry Stewart inquired as to whether this inclusion in the Capital Reserve would mean a decrease in the Parks and Recreation regular budget. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett replied yes, this item was down 48% from last year.

The Administrative Sub-Committee's general conclusion was that they were okay with all the items addressed and discussed. Bob Brent inquired as to Appraisal being up 40% and Assistant Town Administrator Shackett explained this was due to the update, which happens every other year, being scheduled for next year. Terry Stewart asked if the Board of Selectmen was happy with appraisals. Selectman Benavides replied they were and Chairman Hickok added that the State was confident with Appraiser, Wil Corcoran.

Skip Murphy discussed the Technology budget and that it appeared everyone was happy with the current situation. A decrease of \$250,000 in Debt Service was also discussed as being due to payment of a two year Sewer Debt.

Chairman Hickok then opened discussion to whether Town and School employee names and salaries should be published and reported to the public. Doug Lambert informed the Board he brought in three printed publications from the Towns of Loudon, Hudson and Hampstead who all publish employee names and salaries. Lengthy discussion ensued with some members being for and others against. Bill Phillips stated that Town Employees should be informed what their actual salary including health and other benefits such as vacation and sick time totaled in monetary terms. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett explained that all employees are already aware of the total cost of every benefit they receive, in addition to their salaries, and are shown this in writing every year. After much lengthy discussion, Bill Phillips motioned to table the discussion to a later date. Margo Weeks seconded. Motion carried.

The Committee reviewed Sub-Committee assignments. Terry Stewart agreed to help Dale Dormody and Doug Lambert with the Police Department Sub-Committee, if needed, since Phyllis Corrigan would not be available to meet with the Police Chief until November 11th.

Skip Murphy motioned to accept the Budget Committee minutes of October 18, 2007 and was seconded by Bob Brent. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda N. Ferreira  
Recording Secretary