

## **GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**December 6, 2007**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Gilford Town Hall**

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

Members Absent: Doug Lambert and Skip Murphy

Also in attendance was School Superintendent Dr. Paul DeMinico, Assistant Superintendent for Business Scott Isabelle and Recording Secretary Melinda Ferreira.

The following school staff members were also present at the meeting: Buildings & Grounds Supervisor Tim Bartlett, School Board Chairperson Sue Allen, School Board Member Derek Tomlinson, Middle School Principal Jim Kemmerer, High School Principal Ken Wiswell, Director of Student Services Esther Kennedy and District Technology Coordinator Brenda McGee.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to the evening's meeting to review the School District Budget and informed members of the change in location for the Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting which will now be held at the High School Library.

Chairman Hickok then turned the meeting over to School Superintendent Dr. Paul DeMinico who passed out the Default Budget of the School which was approved by the School Board earlier this week, as well as the power point presentation handout representing the new Proposed Budget. Superintendent DeMinico explained to the Committee that the proposed budget showed an increase of \$340,448 (a 1.6% increase this year, vs. a 4.2% increase last year). The smaller increase was due to four discretionary staff reductions as a result of lower enrollment figures, and replacing senior staff openings with newer, lower paid staff. Other budget decelerators were briefly discussed. This, however, did not include two proposed warrant articles for capital projects which consisted of the High School (GHS) & Elementary School (GES) roof replacements totaling \$475,000 (\$50,000 of which will come from a capital reserve fund) and \$50,000 for the replacement of the School District building boilers. Discussion ensued over the urgency of the roof replacements and cost of the boilers. Bob Brent and Terry Stewart asked to tour the roofs and boilers to which Buildings & Grounds Supervisor Tim Bartlett replied could be toured anytime. It was stated the roof replacement costs had come substantially down since last year due to collaborative efforts with Sheldon Morgan to retain the stone ballast on the roof for other Town projects as well as not having to now strip the roof down to bare deck. Buildings & Grounds Supervisor Tim Bartlett added that the roof leaks are difficult to see under the stone and are being repaired every couple months; therefore it would be replaced with mechanically fastened roofing (no stone). The roofs which had a 15 year warranty are now 22 years old and urgently need replacement. There is also asbestos between the ceiling & roof at GES which would be disturbed by any major leaks and mold is a very real issue with the GHS roof leaks. SAU office space was also briefly overviewed and discussed, with the library now not seeming like a viable option at this point.

Non-Discretionary areas of increase discussed were in teachers' salaries, health insurance &

dental premiums, fuel, oil & electricity, bus transportation & retirement which are all either mandated by law, controlled by the marketplace, or by contract. Superintendent DeMinico further explained that the District was moving to a competency based education and adding a summer school program at GMS to strengthen this aim in the High School.

Discretionary increases discussed were textbooks for GES, an external review by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) for GHS accreditation purposes (every ten years) as well as an internal curriculum replacement cycle done in different areas each year; this year being Math. Substitute teachers were under budgeted last year, creating an increase in the budget this year. Flooring replacement at GES was discussed as well as carpets, mats & pavement at GMS and locker & table replacements at GHS in addition to ten additional summer days of guidance counselor coverage at GHS. District wide, some maintenance issues at the Meadows were reviewed as well as the emergency preparedness safety fund. Further in-depth discussion ensued over the above items.

Chairman Hickok then turned the meeting over to Assistant Superintendent of Business Scott Isabelle to go over the Default Budget which totaled \$21,975,534 for a difference of \$95,092 between the proposed and default budgets. Discussion ensued. Assistant Superintendent Isabelle stated he would create a handout with the proposed and default budgets side by side for easier comparison. Further accounts were reviewed. He informed the Committee that Special Education items were contractual due to Individual Education Plans (IEP's) being a mandatory obligation which included new equipment, supplies & transportation. Discussion ensued.

The Food Service Budget was then reviewed and the Committee was informed that this was self-funded through its' own revenue as well as state money. Chairman Hickok added that it looked like a much more in-depth budget than a few years ago and was pleased. Discussion ensued.

Assistant Superintendent Isabelle stated that in regards to the Federal Projects Budget, law required a best estimate for the budget, but a majority of the projects were not yet approved; therefore costs were not totally known at this point. He added that Title 1, which had previously received grant monies, will be level funded next year to offset costs of assistant teachers for literacy. Other grants were then discussed and Selectman Benavides added that if all were approved, it would total \$417,000 in grant funds.

Warrant articles were then further discussed and it was stated that additional articles would be forthcoming by January 7, 2008. Discussion ensued.

Margo Weeks then motioned to approve the sum of \$417,287 for the Federal Projects Budget and was seconded by Phyllis Corrigan. Motion carried.

Phyllis Corrigan motioned to approve the \$689,658 Food Service Budget and was seconded by John O'Brien. Motion carried.

Terry Stewart then motioned to approve the minutes of November 29<sup>th</sup> and was seconded by Bob Brent. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda N. Ferreira  
Recording Secretary