

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
POST-PUBLIC HEARING
January 10, 2008
7:00 p.m.
Gilford High School Auditorium

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

Members Absent: None

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

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok stated this post-hearing meeting was to wrap up Warrant Article items and the Gunstock Acres Water District (GAWD) Budget in preparation for Tuesday's Town Public Hearing.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett began discussion with Article 15 to see if the Town will vote to raise \$100,000 for use by the Library Trustees at the new library. Funding is to be provided from the proceeds of the sale of land on Potter Hill Rd which was purchased in 2004 to build a new library. The article is contingent upon adequate sale proceeds from the piece of land. She found in her research that this amount needed to be increased to \$110,000 due to \$25,000 being added to a Capital Reserve Fund in 2003, and a 2004 vote to purchase land for \$150,000 (some of which was to come from private funds and some to come from the Capital Reserve Fund). Lengthy discussion ensued.

Margo Weeks motioned to recommend the article and was seconded by John O'Brien. Doug Lambert spoke against the article stating that he thought the proceeds should go back to the taxpayer in the general fund. Sue Greene agreed. Selectman Benavides affirmed his thoughts were that the funds were meant for the Library and that voters should get to decide. Selectman Connie Grant, who was present in the audience, stated her thoughts on why the money should go to the Library. Bill Phillips spoke to the funds going back to the general fund. Skip Murphy added that the money was meant for the land, and since the voters voted down the library building, the money should also go back to taxpayers in the general fund. Margo Weeks' thoughts were that voters wanted it to go to the Library, and to leave it to the voters to decide. Assistant Administrator Shackett added that the language used was to purchase land and build & design a new library; stating that DRA's opinion was that the money must go back into the Capital Reserve Fund to make it whole again. This article does not do that and voters still need to vote on how to use the funds. Dale Dormody spoke in favor of the article. Terry Stewart spoke against, stating funds should also go back to taxpayers, via the general fund. After further lengthy discussion, the motion to recommend Article 15 failed 7 to 4.

Warrant Article 16 regarding the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's stipend of \$57,952 (w/ benefits, the total value being \$74,588) was then brought up for discussion. Assistant Administrator Shackett explained that the monetary amount needed to be adjusted due to there being 53 weeks of pay and so on. Discussion ensued. Selectman Benavides explained that as an

'elected' official, the position is not covered in the Town's review process; therefore the only way the salary/benefits could change, once approved by voters, would be by the TC/TC submitting a new warrant article to voters. Doug Lambert added that it was a convoluted situation. After brief discussion, John O'Brien motioned to recommend the warrant article and was seconded by Bob Brent. Motion unanimously carried.

The following seven warrant articles were for Youth Services and Community Programs that have continued to be a contentious issue among the Committee. Article 17 in the amount of \$32,359 for the Youth Services Bureau was motioned to be recommended by John O'Brien and seconded by Margo Weeks. Dale Dormody and Selectman Benavides were in favor of the article. After further discussion, the motion failed 7 to 4.

Terry Stewart then motioned to not recommend Articles 18 through 23. Doug Lambert seconded the motion. Margo Weeks stated she would prefer to vote separately for each article. John O'Brien and Dale Dormody agreed. Doug Lambert expressed his philosophical objection to taxpayer money funding programs which should be privately funded; and spoke in favor of lumping the remaining articles together. Discussion ensued. Motion failed 7 to 4.

Phyllis Corrigan then motioned to recommend Warrant Article 18 regarding \$23,500 for the Lakes Region Community Health & Hospice. She was seconded by Margo Weeks. Motion failed 6 to 5.

Warrant Article 19 in the amount of \$3,400 for Lakes Region Family Services was motioned to be recommended by Phyllis Corrigan and seconded by Margo Weeks. Motion failed 8 to 3.

Warrant Article 20 in the amount of \$8,345 for the Community Action Program was then moved to be approved by Phyllis Corrigan. She was seconded by Margo Weeks. Motion failed 6 to 5.

Warrant Article 21 in the amount of \$1,800 for New Beginnings was also moved to be approved by Phyllis Corrigan. She was again seconded by Margo Weeks. Motion failed 8 to 3.

Margo Weeks motioned to recommend Warrant Article 22 in the amount of \$8,749 for Genesis Behavioral Health. She was seconded by Phyllis Corrigan. Motion failed 7 to 4.

Margo Weeks then motioned to recommend Warrant Article 23 in the amount of \$3,330 for the American Red Cross and was seconded by Phyllis Corrigan. Motion failed 9 to 2.

Discussion then moved on to Article 27 in the amount of \$10,000 to support activities and facilities of the Lake Winnepesaukee Sailing Association for a Youth Sailing School & various Youth/Adult Programs which would be open to all Lakes Region residents regardless of their ability to pay. Phyllis Corrigan motioned to recommend the article and was seconded by John O'Brien. Motioned unanimously failed.

Town Administrator Juris informed the Budget Committee of the need for an additional last minute article to place \$150,000 of funds to come from the undesignated fund balance into a Capital Reserve Fund for the new Police Station in order to keep the project alive. He added that it would not affect the tax rate. Discussion ensued. Selectman Grant explained the reasons for the additional funds needed. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett read the new article to the Committee.

Phyllis Corrigan then motioned to recommend said article and was seconded by John O'Brien. Discussion ensued over the undesignated fund balance of about \$5 million and about why the possible fiscal year change project had not been moved forward. Town Administrator Juris went on to discuss meeting with the police station project architect and stated that based on current plans, the project would cost \$1.7 million, not including the geo-thermal heating system which would encompass the entire Town Hall complex. After further lengthy discussion, the motion unanimously carried.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett moved discussion to the Town's Property Liability Insurance which has a projected increase of 9% for next year; therefore the budget will be short. Due to this, she requested the Budget Committee approve an additional \$3,000 for the line item on page 5 of the Budget handed out today. She also requested the Budget Committee approve an additional \$1,200 be added to the Unemployment Compensation line item on page 3 of said Budget hand out due to a non-discretionary 60% increase. After brief discussion, Terry Stewart motioned to add the \$3,000 and \$1,200 amounts to said Budget and was seconded by Bob Brent. All were in favor; motion carried.

The Gunstock Acres Water District (GAWD) was then brought up for discussion by Terry Stewart who supplied the Committee with a current approved copy of their Budget and discussed the new wells coming on line, extensive testing for DES approval of wells, and a new SCADA system that links all wells to a central monitoring system. After brief discussion, Bill Phillips motioned to accept the report and budget and was seconded by Margo Weeks. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda N. Ferreira
Recording Secretary