

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 16, 2008

6:30 p.m.

Gilford Town Hall

Members Present:~::~~Dale Dormody, Terry Stewart, Kevin Roy, J. Kevin Hayes, John O'Brien, Richard Young, Richard Hickok, Skip Murphy, Sue Greene and Margo Weeks.

Members Absent:~ Doug Lambert and Bill Phillips.

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Scott Dunn, Finance Director Geoffrey Ruggles and Recording Secretary Renee N McMahan.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee and stated that tonight's meeting would consist of reviewing the Administrations, Appraisal, Technology and Welfare Budget.

Chairman Hickok reminded all members of their obligation to familiarize themselves with the Towns Budget.

Terry Stewart stated that they would not be reviewing the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors budget tonight due to the fact the meeting was not publicly posted and that Town Clerk/Tax Collector Denise Morrissette would not participate in an illegal meeting. Terry stated that he would be rescheduling the reviewing of the TC/TC budget.

Terry Started the review of the Administrative Budget which includes Administration, General Government, Boards and Committee's, Professional Services, Information Systems, Appraisal, Insurance and Benefits, Care of Cemeteries, Town Insurances and Health and Welfare. ~

Terry thanked Geoff for the excel spreadsheets that he prepared for the committee. They are a big help with comparing the past years budget to the proposed budget. After reviewing the Elected Officials proposal, Sue Greene commented on the proposal of adding a stipend to the Moderator and Supervisors of the checklist for the 2010 budget. There were no objections to the proposal for this budget. Terry motioned to approve the \$10,500 budget. Margo seconded the motion. Motion carried 10 to 0.

Moving onto the Administrations budget proposal, there was a discussion regarding meetings and dues. Skip was concerned with town paying for numerous membership dues for employees. Skip voiced his opinion that the employee should pay the dues not the town. John O'Brien thought it was a legitimate discussion but stated that by paying the dues for an employee to partake in seminars and training courses it educates them in a way that will save the town money in the future.

It was stated that the Employee Recognition portion of the budget was being well spent. Scott and Geoff are going to be setting up a program to recognize outstanding employees. Skip inquired about the merit increase rate, which is an average of 3.75 %. There were no objections to the Administrations budget proposal. Terry motioned to accept the BOS recommendation of \$368,201, John seconded the motion. Motion carried 10 to 0.

Moving to Boards and Committees, there were no objections to this proposal. Terry motion to accept the \$1,600 budget. John seconded the motion, Motion carried 10 to 0.

Moving to Professional Services. It was noted that Liberty Hill is not resolved at this time. John inquired whether Selectmen Benevides and Selectmen Grant obtained legal services regarding the Evans Juris lawsuit against the town. TA Dunn noted that council was obtained through the town. Terry motioned to accept the proposal of \$118,040 for the 2009 budget. Skip seconded the motion. Motion carried 10 to 0.

Moving on to the Technology budget. It was noted that the Fire Department had requested again this year for an LCD Projector. A suggestion was brought up that the school has old projectors that the Fire Department could get on from the school. Skip was concerned as to where the money was taken from for the cost of the new email server. If it was out of the 2007 budget or if this was an added cost to the town. Geoff and Scott were neither here when the server was purchased and noted that they would find out where this money came from and get back to them. Skip made a suggestion that the town look into free software in place of Microsoft. He stated that he has been using it for years now and has had no major problems with the free software. Geoff stated that with all the users we have on the system it would be hard to re-train them all to use new software and that getting help when needed would be time consuming because you would need to diagnose your problem online and get an answer from a computer not a real person. Kevin Roy was concerned with how often we need to come into compliance with the software companies. Geoff stated that it is not often, usually when a new user is added and a new computer added. There were no objections to this budget. Terry motioned to accept the proposal of \$133,000. Margo seconded the motion. Motion carried 9 to 1 with Skip Murphy voting no.

Moving onto the Appraisal Office portion of the budget. The re-evaluation of the Town was discussed. It was noted that when this happens that this department's budget is usually lower. No objections were stated for this proposal. Terry Stewart motioned to accept the \$198,980 budget. Kevin Roy seconded the motion, Motion carried 10 to 0.

In regards to the Insurance and Benefits portion of the budget, Terry stated that there was a correction to the Police and Fire figures for the NHRS. The correct numbers for the police was \$ 131,551 and the fire was \$138,298. There was discussion on the employee's contribution portion of the benefits. It was noted that they are working on getting all employees to be at 10% for contributing. This will be looked at in the 2010 budget but will not be addressed in this year's budget due to the negotiations with the Police and DPW Unions. It was noted that TA Dunn is re-writing the Town Personnel Policy at this time along with the negotiation with the Union Laws. There were no objections to this proposal. Terry motioned to accept the budget of \$1,971,477. Kevin Roy seconded the motion. Motion carried 10 to 0.

After a brief discussion on the Cemeteries Budget was discussed. There was a discussion on the McCoy Cemetery that was taken by tax deed by the Town of Gilford. It was not know how this happened, but is being looked into. It was also discussed on who should be funding the care of these cemeteries, the town or the trustee's? Terry motioned to approve the \$30,100 budget and was seconded by Margo Weeks. ~Motion carried 10 to 0.

The \$90,000 Insurances segment of the Administration budget was discussed. It was noted that there have been several incidents with cruisers and plow trucks this year in claims submitted. The motion to

approve this portion of the budget was motioned by Terry and seconded by Kevin Roy. ~Motion carried 10 to 0.

Review of the Health and Welfare portion of the Administration Budget. ~Erika Johnson submitted a letter to the budget committee asking for an increase in her budget due to the rising cost of home heating fuel, gasoline, rent and food taking into consideration the tough economy. Erika stated that she is working very closely with numerous outside agencies so that the increased costs of assisting the residents of the Town of Gilford can be shared across the board level. She urged the budget committee to support these outside agencies and then asked to introduce the director of the Community Action Program, Judy Scothorne, so that she may inform the committee what the CAP is all about. After a long discussion, the board voiced their concerns with contributing to the CAP and how the money is allocated and raised in order for it to stay in our community. It was stated that she would be able to bring this issue to the table again when the board discusses the Outside Agencies portion of the budget and asked her to be available to present her request along with some answers to the questions that were presented by the committee and that during the review of the Outside Agencies would be when the committee would vote on supporting or not supporting them. There were no objections to the Welfare budget and Terry motioned to accept. Skip seconded the motion. Motion carried 10 to 0.

Other Government agencies were then discussed. A discussion whether the Laconia Airport Authority payments should have ended in 2008 was brought up. Skip requested that this portion of the budget be removed considering the length of the agreement with the Airport which he stated should have ended in 2008. Skip motioned to remove this from the budget. Kevin Hayes seconded the motion. The motion was voted 9-1. Motion was not carried. It was noted that Scott and Geoff will look into the agreement with the Airport and then decide whether or not to take this out of the budget proposal. The Laconia water was noted as a fixed amount each year. Terry motioned to accept the budget of \$56,585. Motion carried 10 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee N. McMahon
Recording Secretary