

**GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**November 6, 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, Doug Lambert, Margo Weeks and Bill Phillips.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok turned the meeting over to Committee member Sue Greene, who presented the report of the Budget Sub-Committee on the Police Department's budget. She began her presentation by reviewing changes in full and part-time wages. Doug Lambert inquired regarding the rationale for the change from part-time wages to full-time overtime wages. Deputy Chief Keenan stated that the limited availability of the three part-time officers prevents them from covering shifts. This coverage has increased as employees earn additional vacation time due to longevity.

Discussion then ensued regarding Special Details. Finance Director Ruggles explained that it is possible for the Town to have a fund devoted to Special Details, where the revenue that is generated is used to pay the officers for the detail. This is advantageous over the current method of budgeting for Special Details, which can vary greatly from one year to another.

Sue Greene reported that vehicle fuel costs have increased and the 2009 budget has been based on a price of \$3.25 per gallon for gasoline. Doug Lambert inquired if the Department has decreased their mileage. Deputy Chief Keenan stated that mileage is slowly dropping, although it does increase during the summer months.

Deputy Chief Keenan advised the Board that this is the first time that the Police Department has had the Humane Society as part of their budget. He explained the increase to \$9,250 for 2009, but also indicated that a 5% discount is available if the invoice is paid in January. Deputy Chief Keenan also provided statistics on the number of animals that have been taken to the shelter in 2008.

Sue Greene reported that the Sub-Committee has no problem with the proposed Police Department budget, which now reflects a 1.9% increase.

Information on cruisers, vests and a digital camera was presented next. Deputy Chief Keenan provided information on the process of vest replacement. Brief discussion ensued on the use of tasers and a digital radio update. Deputy Chief Keenan also provided an explanation of the Administrative expenses, as they relate to DWI testing and certified mailings for unlicensed dogs, which are required by statute.

Doug Lambert asked for an update on the cruiser replacements. Deputy Chief Keenan explained the importance of keeping the mileage on vehicles balanced. He also

explained the specialized uses of the SUV and van.

Bill Phillips moved to approve \$1,485,711 for the Police Department's 2009 operating budget. Richard Young seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

Bill Phillips moved to approve \$67,700 for the Police Department's 2009 capital expenses (two police cruisers, 4 Ballistic Vests and 1 digital camera). Richard Young seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

Chairman Hickok thanked the members of the Police Budget Sub-Committee for their presentation, as well as Chief Markland and Deputy Chief Keenan. He then turned the meeting over to Budget Committee member Kevin Roy, who presented the Fire Department's 2009 budget. Kevin Roy thanked Chief Hayes and Fire Engineer Bill Akerley for their assistance and patience in the preparation of the 2009 budget. The proposed 2009 operating budget totals \$1,150,817, which is a 5.3% increase over 2008.

The first portion of the budget to be reviewed was for non-discretionary items – wages/salaries. Special Details are billed out at \$40.00 per hour, the same as the Police Department. Finance Director Ruggles indicated that this could also be included in the special revenue fund that was discussed during the Police Department's budget presentation.

Discussion ensued on the Fire Inspector position, which has been proposed to have increased hours in 2009. Doug Lambert asked for an explanation of how this position functions. Chief Hayes provided the Committee with an explanation of the duties of the Fire Inspector, which are ongoing with commercial businesses and any property requiring an assembly permit. He also stated that a request is before the Board of Selectmen to review a proposed fee schedule to help offset these additional hours. Chief Hayes further explained that the fees were determined by using specific criteria for the approximate time involved for inspections, rather than an arbitrary fee amount.

Chief Hayes also explained a proposed decrease in the line item for Call Company Pay. He indicated that now that the Department has some hard data to analyze, they have determined that the amount can be reduced from 2008.

Brief discussion ensued on the increase to the Fire Department's budget due to the inclusion of vehicle fuel for 2009. That amount alone accounts for 2% of the budget increase. Discussion ensued regarding the administration car that will be obtained from the Police Department, maintenance on the Opticoms (traffic devices) and station furnishings. Chief Hayes pointed out that the additional car will result in decreased mileage on the pickup truck and additional fuel savings. It will also delay the replacement of the pickup truck.

Extensive discussion then focused on the possibility of having a town-wide spare car. Town Administrator Dunn reported that the Police Department will have three surplus cruisers in 2009 and the Board of Selectmen voted to designate one of them for use by

the Recreation Department. Chief Hayes explained that the Fire Department's administration car will be available to be shared by the Fire Inspector on weekdays and members of the Department attending training and classes in the evenings and on weekends.

Discussion then ensued on station coverage while a firefighter is attending a class. Chief Hayes indicated that station coverage is provided by other career firefighters since the call company does not have career level firefighters. More discussion followed on the matter of having a career firefighter enroll in the paramedic program. Chief Hayes stated that this will make six (6) career level paramedics. He also pointed out the strong commitment by the individual since extensive hours are devoted on the firefighter's own time.

Kevin Roy moved to approve \$1,150,817 for the Fire Department's 2009 operating budget. Skip Murphy seconded. Chief Hayes questioned a \$3,000 discrepancy between the total budget figure he received approximately a month ago and the total budget figure being used tonight by the Budget Committee. Town Administrator Dunn pointed out that an adjustment was made in vehicle fuel consumption, resulting in a decrease in that line item.

Terry Stewart stated that he recently attended a Fire Engineer's meeting and was very impressed by the professionalism demonstrated at the meeting. He encouraged other Budget Committee members to attend a meeting, if possible. The motion carried 12-0.

Chief Hayes provided a brief explanation of what the Emergency Management line item could be used for. Kevin Roy moved to approve \$1,000 for Emergency Management. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

The proposed 2009 Forestry budget has been reduced from the 2008 to \$4,300. Kevin Roy moved to approve \$4,300 for Forestry. John O'Brien seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

Kevin Roy then outlined proposed new equipment for 2009. The Department would like to purchase a replacement Zodiac inflatable rescue boat and a Turbo Draft suction strainer. Chief Hayes provided a detailed explanation of how the Turbo Draft suction strainer works.

Kevin Roy moved to approve \$12,250 under Capital – New Equipment. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

Brief discussion ensued on Fire Department Revenue. Committee members appreciated having the opportunity to see revenue figures. They also commended Kevin Roy for his thorough presentation.

The Budget Committee briefly reviewed recent School District transfers. Doug Lambert explained that these were primarily under the Special Education budget, although a

savings in the salary line, which was a result of employee turnover, enabled the District to have funds available for asbestos to be removed from three classrooms. The Committee members appreciated the opportunity for members of the Budget Committee to be able to have these transfers shown and explained to them.

Skip Murphy brought up the matter of the increase in the 2008 tax rate. Town Administrator Dunn explained that the Town transferred \$450,000 of the undesignated fund balance to keep the Town portion of the rate increase as low as possible. He also pointed out that valuations decreased by more than \$54 million, also affecting the tax rate.

Town Administrator Dunn stated that additional information will be forthcoming on the two (2) union negotiations and the police station renovation/addition.

Chairman Hickok advised Committee members that the School District sub-committees will be determined at next week's meeting.

John O'Brien moved to adjourn. Kevin Roy seconded. The motion passed 12-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey  
Administrative Secretary