

**GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**November 13, 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 Terry Stewart, who presented the report of the Budget Sub-Committee on the Parks and Recreation Department's budget. He began his presentation by reviewing wage information. Mr. Stewart indicated that the Board of Selectmen did make cuts to this portion of the budget, in that they cut a full-time position and reduced the hours of a part-time position. They also cut \$14,000 for the purchase of a truck, although a police cruiser that is being rotated out will be designated for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Recreation Director Herb Greene clarified that the Department did not make a request for a full-time position this year, but it was mentioned by Recreation Commission member Thom Francoeur in the course of sub-committee discussions that this could be forthcoming in the future.

Terry Stewart stated that money has been saved by not purchasing a new vehicle for the Parks and Recreation Department. He also pointed out that he learned that employees have been transporting weed-whackers and gasoline in their private vehicles, which is not a realistic expectation. The used police cruiser will eliminate this problem and also save money in the budget for mileage reimbursement.

Discussion then ensued on the Publishing Notices line item. Director Greene provided information for the Committee on the rationale for having the Program Schedule printed and distributed. Although the newspaper does carry information on Recreation programs, it only reaches a specific demographic. Distributing printed schedules to students in Gilford provides more widespread coverage. Expenses for the Town band cover a stipend for the director and licensing rights for music for all concerts, including Old Home Day.

General discussion ensued on the Parks and Recreation budget. Although some line items increased, others went down. The Committee also briefly discussed the Recreation Revolving Fund, which is used to cover the costs of various trips and activities that are fee supported.

In closing, Terry Stewart stated that he was very impressed with the answers given by Director Greene regarding their programming. He moved to approve \$196,232 for the 2009 Parks and Recreation Department Budget. John O'Brien seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

The next portion of the budget to be discussed was the Skating Rink. Director Greene is looking at various options to keep the facility operating, including looking at additional programming. Terry Stewart stated that the ice surface there is not as desirable as an artificial surface. Extensive discussion ensued on looking into ways to get out from under the conditions of past grants for the skating rink.

Terry Stewart moved to approve \$9,215 for the 2009 Skating Rink expenses. Richard Young seconded. Motion carried 12-0.

The Budget Committee continued their review with the Library Budget. Skip Murphy, a member of the Library Sub-Committee, provided a presentation on their findings after meeting with the Library Director and Trustees on November 6 and November 11, 2008. He stated that the Library budget has increased 7.46% from 2008 to 2009. He reviewed the rationale for changes under Wages, including an additional part-time position. He also stated that Telephone expenses have increased, but since this is a new building, the Town does need to take care of it.

Skip Murphy pointed out that the Sub-committee, in order to not have to cut out the part-time position, is recommending that cuts be made under New Equipment, Computer Equipment and Maintenance and Books and Periodicals. This changes their recommended total figure to \$292,716. John O'Brien inquired if the cuts were made for budgetary reasons only. Skip Murphy replied yes, we are in some tough economic times.

Dale Dormody stated that the Budget Committee members should not rely on this Sub-committee report to make their decision. He further stated that this Sub-committee departed from the normal review process and feels it is necessary to start over. All other Department Heads are allowed to explain their budgets line by line and with this review, no analysis or data or user statistics were considered. He encouraged Budget Committee members to listen to the tape recording of the Sub-committee meeting and they would see that this was not done.

Mr. Dormody stated that approximately 40% of the questions asked by the Sub-committee were philosophical ones and the recommendations being presented are based on pre-determined ideas about the Library. He does not feel that this is how the Budget Committee works because a line by line review was not done. He feels that all Sub-committees should follow the same procedure.

Skip Murphy commented that Mr. Dormody is married to the Library Director and is also a paid vendor. At this point, Chairman Hickok discontinued the discussion and stated that the Sub-committees have no obligation to do a line by line budget review. Terry Stewart stated that he attended the Library Sub-committee meeting and he disagrees with Dale Dormody's assessment to dismiss their recommendations. He further stated that it is very difficult to separate philosophical ideas from the Library's budget and Doug Lambert, a member of the Sub-committee, did ask about several line items that did not

deal with any philosophical ideas. It was a surprise for the Sub-committee to learn that a part-time person had been added after the 2008 Town Meeting, but they had a real problem reducing or eliminating a position. He also pointed out that the cameras that are being recommended to be cut were also removed from the budget in 2008, as well as the requested chairs. These items are not necessary for circulation.

Doug Lambert pointed out that the Sub-committee had two meetings on the Library budget and agreed that the additional part-time position was necessary, given the new building and increased circulation. The Library's percentage increase is the largest of any Town Department and in the spirit of the lean times we are in, a dollar amount should be set, much as it is for new road construction, and you get what you can with that sum of money. The Sub-committee level funded the line items that had been increased, but left the part-time position intact. He reiterated that they did not cut or reduce a position that would affect people – they cut “things”.

Kevin Roy also took exception with Dale Dormody's assessment. They did go through many of the line items and did not make any cuts to wages. He stated that he stands by this budget because most line items were addressed. Dale Dormody replied that the Sub-committee did not factor in information from the Library Trustees and there was no discussion on the increased usage and circulation at the Library. This is the first time that the term “level funded” has been used in the 2009 budget process and questioned why it was used with the Library.

Bill Phillips inquired about the addition of a part-time position. Library Director Katherine Dormody stated that a full-time person got sick in June and then did not end up returning to work. As a result, two part-time persons were hired to fill the position and one of them became full-time after they were moved into the new building.

Chairman Hickok stated that he is satisfied with the work of the Sub-committee and he does not want to do the review over again. John O'Brien stated that the Budget Committee has approved some conservative budgets and would like some justification for the line item reductions. Discussion then ensued on the fact that the Library budget still increased for 2009, but the Sub-committee reduced the amount of the increase.

Skip Murphy stated that the final decision of the Sub-committee was to get the Library budget more in line with other Department budgets. They thought that a 7.46% increase was too much. Discussion then ensued on keeping the line item for Books and Periodicals at \$18,000, the same as it was in 2008. If the circulation is up, the \$19,000 figure should be retained for 2009.

Dale Dormody stated that he now understands and respects the work of the Library Sub-committee, but the approach to look at the bottom line of the budget is different than what has been done with any other department.

Following brief discussion on a procedural matter, Skip Murphy moved to approve \$292,716 for the 2009 Library Budget. Doug Lambert seconded.

Bill Phillips asked for an explanation on the circulation figures. Library Director Dormody stated that these figures represent an item being checked out of the Library. The door count is a different figure and it represents people using the Library. Library Trustee Robert Kammeraad stated that Dale Dormody does not charge the Library for his services and he feels that wages and most of the other line items were discussed at the Sub-committee meeting. He further stated that he calculated the non-wage increase at 1.46% and the wage increase at 6%. If the Sub-committee is agreeable to the wage figures presented, the other increases only total approximately \$4,100. He also pointed out how the Sub-committee is recommending that the Postage line be level funded in 2009. Since it is anticipated that this line will be over-expended by \$200 in 2008 with the same appropriation, this does not make sense.

Robert Kammeraad stated that the Library Trustees closely monitor the expenses of the Library, further explaining the process by which the Library budget is scrutinized by them. He also pointed out that there are 5,000 active card holders and there is a 46% increase in adult book circulation and 42% in non-adult circulation. Chairman Hickok pointed out that despite these figures, what people can afford is also a factor.

Terry Stewart reiterated his previously stated position regarding philosophical ideas being part of the Library. He also pointed out that the increased programming at the Library brings more people to the Library, thus increasing circulation. Discussion then focused on the DPW budget, which sets a limit on road construction, even though everyone uses the roads.

Discussion followed on the cuts made by the Library Sub-committee. Library Director Dormody explained the need for the three (3) additional cameras, to cover areas that are not otherwise visible. She also stated that there are currently twenty-four (24) computers in the Library, and the ongoing computer maintenance plan replaces three (3) computers every year. The three (3) computers being requested are not additional computers. Brief discussion followed on the need for additional chairs and shelving.

John O'Brien moved to amend Line Items 312 and 316, restoring them back to their original figure. This would increase the bottom line by \$1,500 (\$1,000 and \$500), for a total of \$294,216. Skip Murphy seconded.

Kevin Hayes inquired why the computer cost is so high. Library Director Dormody stated that it covers the cost of the CPU and software licenses. More discussion ensued on the idea of "controlled growth". Kevin Hayes then suggested that the Library budget could be reviewed on a line by line basis. Margo Weeks indicated that she got quite a bit of additional information tonight, which has been very beneficial. She further stated that the Budget Committee is approving the bottom line figure of the budget and the Library can spend this amount however they see fit. Doug Lambert pointed out that this is how the additional part-time position in the Library came about. Dale Dormody stated that he is very happy with the amount of information that is coming out at tonight's meeting.

A vote on the amendment of \$294,216 indicated a vote of 8 – yes and 3 – no. Chairman Hickok abstained. Motion carried by a vote of 8-3.

Kevin Hayes offered an additional amendment to increase the Library budget by \$3,200, for a total of \$297,416. This would increase the line items under supplies, postage and computers. Margo Weeks seconded. A vote on the amendment of \$297,416 indicated a vote of 5 – yes and 7 – no. Amendment fails by a vote of 5-7.

Richard Young stated that this Committee should support the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen and Library Trustees. The residents of Gilford support the Library and as hard times are upon us, the Library is used more and more.

Doug Lambert stated that he recognizes the value of the Library, despite his philosophical differences. Terry Stewart pointed out that the Library also had a large percentage increase last year. Dale Dormody agrees with Richard Young's assessment of the Library and reiterated that both the Library Trustees and Board of Selectmen have reviewed this budget. He also pointed out that cutting the three (3) replacement computers disrupts the Library's computer maintenance schedule. A vote on the amended main motion of \$294,216 indicated a vote of 8 – yes and 4 – no. Motion carried by a vote of 8-4.

The Budget Committee then moved onto determining the School District Budget Sub-committees. The following sub-committees were set up:

Administration and Maintenance District Wide – Doug Lambert, John O'Brien, Dale Dormody and Sue Greene.

High School – Kevin Hayes, Bill Phillips and Terry Stewart.

Middle School – Bill Phillips, Richard Young and Kevin Roy.

Elementary School – Richard Young, Dale Dormody and Doug Lambert.

Special Education – John O'Brien, Terry Stewart, Skip Murphy and Sue Greene.

Technology – Skip Murphy, Terry Stewart and Kevin Roy.

Brief discussion ensued on whether or not to limit how long a Budget Committee member can be on one particular Sub-committee. Sue Greene expressed concern with the increase in the 2008 tax rate.

Margo Weeks moved to adjourn. Terry Stewart seconded. The motion passed 12-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey  
Administrative