

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 28, 2009

6:30 p.m.

Town Of Gilford

Members Present: John O'Brien, Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Bill Phillips, Margo Weeks, Dale Dormody, Terry Stewart, Kevin Roy, Fred Butler, Doug Lambert, and Skip Murphy

Members Absent: Phyllis Corrigan

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Scott Dunn and Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to this evening's organizational meeting.

Bill Phillips moved to nominate Dick Hickok as Budget Committee Chairman. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Doug Lambert moved to nominate Skip Murphy as Budget Committee Vice-Chairman. Sue Greene seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 8-yes and 2-no.

Chairman Hickok opened up discussion on the matter of sub-committees. Doug Lambert felt that the sub-committees worked well but expressed concern in the area of public input. Chairman Hickok stated that the Committee could plan to have public input first as a fixed agenda item. Margo Weeks pointed out how the School Board's agenda is set in advance and members of the public know what topics are to be discussed. She also cautioned that a Board/Committee makes decisions and their meetings are not intended to be a give and take between the members of the Board/Committee and members of the public.

Skip Murphy suggested that discussion can be opened up on a particular budget, then allow brief public input, followed by voting. More discussion ensued with various opinions on the public's ability to provide input at a Budget Committee meeting. Some members of the public do not know that they can speak.

Dale Dormody agreed that public input prior to voting would be a good approach. Sue Greene feels that, overall, the public is not ignored at Budget Committee meetings. Discussion also ensued on the posting of Budget Committee meetings. A suggestion was made to have a disclaimer on the posting regarding public input. Further discussion ensued on the role of the Budget Committee at their public hearings.

Dale Dormody moved that at each Budget Committee meeting, public input will be included on the agenda between budget discussion and budget voting, with defined rules for speakers. Kevin Roy seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Terry Stewart feels that there is a time constraint with sub-committee meetings, providing the sub-committee's recommendation to the Department Manager and then presenting their recommendation to the Budget Committee. He feels that this issue could be resolved with

better scheduling.

Margo Weeks provided an explanation of how the budget process occurs for the School District, commencing in the summer and providing final figures to the Budget Committee around Thanksgiving. Terry Stewart stated that he would like to see more detail on the School budget. Margo Weeks will speak to Assistant Superintendent Scott Isabelle on this matter.

Town Administrator Dunn stated that, in the interest of improved communication and accountability, all requests could be directed to his office, including sub-committee recommendations that need to be passed onto Department Managers. This could include information both to and from the Budget Committee. Committee members agreed that this would solve the problem.

Margo Weeks requested that no meeting be held on the two or three days prior to Christmas. Sue Greene expressed concern with purchases made outside of the budget process. She cited that the School District and Police Departments received windfalls and made additional purchases. Chairman Hickok stated that he feels the Budget Committee only has a role in this situation if the Town overspends their bottom line. Doug Lambert brought up the matter of the JAG Grant, which will provide funds to the Police Department, through Belknap County. He feels that the items requested by the Police Department should have gone through the normal budget process. Terry Stewart feels that if federal stimulus money is received by a department that the amount should be deducted from next year's budget.

The following sub-committees were established:

Administration/Technology – Phyllis Corrigan, Terry Stewart, Skip Murphy
Town Clerk/Tax Collector – Terry Stewart, Skip Murphy, Fred Butler
Police Department – Sue Greene, Dale Dormody, Kevin Roy
Fire Department – Dale Dormody, Dick Hickok, Bill Phillips
Planning Department – Skip Murphy, Phyllis Corrigan, Dale Dormody
Recreation Department – Terry Stewart, Fred Butler, Doug Lambert
Library – Doug Lambert, Sue Greene, Fred Butler
Department of Public Works – Bill Phillips, Doug Lambert, Kevin Roy

Margo Weeks moved to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Kevin Roy seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey
Executive Secretary