

GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 29, 2009
6:30 p.m.
Town Hall

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

Members Absent: None

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Scott Dunn, Finance Director Geoff Ruggles, Director of Public Works Sheldon Morgan and Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey.

Also in attendance were Cemetery Trustees Sue Leach, Judy Cott and Dee Chitty.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to this evening's meeting and stated that they will begin tonight's budget review with Health Officer. Kevin Roy passed out some information on the history of the Health Officer, as well as a summary of the responsibilities associated with the position. He gave Committee members an opportunity to read the material before resuming the review of the Health Officer's budget.

Kevin Roy moved to approve \$3,104 under Health Officer. Mark Corry seconded.

Sue Greene asked about compliance and enforcement of the Health Officer's duties. Health Officer Sheldon Morgan replied that he can prosecute offenders through the court system under RSA 147, but emphasized that his duties cover "public" health matters, not private health matters. Margo Weeks stated that after reading the duties of the Health Officer, it appears that it this could conceivably be a full-time position. She asked Health Officer Morgan if he works with other regional resources and he replied yes, and the possibility of regionalization of Health Officers' duties is being explored. He stressed that the biggest component of his responsibilities is education to the public.

Skip Murphy inquired about the regionalization – how would it be done? Health Officer Morgan replied that it could be done by area, such as having one full-time person cover a number of communities. This would be done under the guidance of the NH Department of Health and Human Services. Doug Lambert asked if it is a requirement to have a health officer. Sheldon Morgan replied no, but communities should have one. Brief discussion ensued on the fact that this position has been a part of various Town departments in the past, such as Fire Department, Planning Department and Public Works Department. Discussion also focused on having health information placed on the Town's website.

A vote on the motion showed a vote of 12-0. Motion carried with all in favor.

Next, Doug Lambert began a review of the Building and Grounds budget. He provided a handout for Committee members indicating various concerns/recommendations, etc. This sub-committee included Kevin Roy, Mark Corry and Doug Lambert.

Doug Lambert began his review by stating that this Department has two full-time employees.

He did note a discrepancy of the amount shown for 2009 wages. Finance Director Ruggles will check into this. Continuing on, Doug Lambert pointed out that the 2010 budget includes a new part-time position in the amount of \$2,850 and this section of the Building and Grounds budget has increased by 6.5%. Town Administrator Dunn explained that the new part-time position is for a Library Custodian. This new position was his idea with the plan to have the individual work a couple of hours a day, three times a week. Sheldon Morgan provided a further explanation of the time that the current Building and Grounds staff is devoting to the Library.

Further review indicated an increase in supplies, which is due to an increased use of town-owned facilities. Brief discussion also ensued regarding the geo-thermal system at the library. Finance Director Ruggles pointed out that he is tracking electricity and fuel costs at the Library. Town Administrator Dunn pointed out that the Board of Selectmen removed over \$71,000 under the Building and Grounds budget, some of which went to other parts of the budget.

Doug Lambert moved to approve \$330,044 for the Building and Grounds budget. Kevin Roy seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 11-1. Motion carried.

A review of the Public Works budget began with the Administrative portion. Doug Lambert pointed out that a part-time position, that was funded but never filled, has been removed from the budget. This position would have been shared by DPW Administration and the Sewer Department.

Doug Lambert moved to approve \$240,971 for DPW Administration. Mark Corry seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 11-1.

Moving onto the Highway/Streets portion of the budget, Doug Lambert stated that there are twelve full-time employees and three part-time employees. The number of part-time employees has decreased from four. Brief discussion ensued regarding a mandate for new road signs. These signs will be replaced in phases over the next few years. The Tools/Hardware/Uniforms budget line is a contract driven expense, although the second set of replacement boots allocated for employees aren't always purchased.

Equipment rental is up 53% from last year, due to an increase for sweeping rental in 2010. Director Morgan provided an explanation of the difference between the functions of the road sweeper vs. the jet rodder. He also explained the criteria being used for determining whether or not to use salt, sand or a combination of both. No new equipment or vehicles are planned to be purchased in 2010. Overall, the Highway budget is down 11.8%. Skip Murphy asked about shaving off \$100,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund. Finance Director Ruggles stated that he did not have the fund balance but briefly left the meeting to get this information. In the meantime, the Committee covered Street Lighting and Bridges.

Under Street Lighting, Doug Lambert moved to approve \$24,849. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 11-1.

Under Bridges, Doug Lambert moved to approve \$5,000. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Returning to the matter of the Capital Reserve Fund, Finance Director Ruggles provided the fund activity and pointed out that large purchases are scheduled for 2011 and 2012. Doug Lambert moved to approve \$1,855,556 for the Highway Budget. Kevin Roy seconded. Fred

Butler inquired about negotiations for the purchase of salt and Director Morgan provided an overview of how savings can be realized by utilizing the lowest bid, which is not always the State bid.

Skip Murphy moved to amend the motion and reduce the Capital Reserve Fund line item by \$50,000. Doug Lambert seconded. Chairman Hickok gave his opinion on Capital Reserve Funds, which he does support. Phyllis Corrigan asked Sheldon Morgan to comment on this proposed amendment, which would mean running a vehicle longer. Director Morgan stated that currently, the lifetime of his vehicles is stretched as far as possible.

A vote on the amendment motion indicated a vote of 4-yes and 8-no. Motion failed.

A vote on the main motion to approve \$1,855,556 for the Highway Budget carried by a vote of 8-yes and 3-no.

Under Vehicle Maintenance, Doug Lambert reported that this portion of the budget is down 22.71% from 2009 and he moved to approve \$214,962 for 2010. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Under Solid Waste, a 3% increase has been requested due to increased tipping fees. Brief discussion ensued on curbside recycling, as well as the current Laconia Transfer Station coupon system that is in place for Gilford residents. Town Administrator Dunn stated that people will recycle more if there is a financial incentive and the current method being used with Laconia provides no incentive.

Doug Lambert moved to approve \$641,168 under Solid Waste. Mark Corry seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Moving onto the Sewer Budget, Doug Lambert stated that a discrepancy also exists with the 2009 wages. Finance Director Ruggles will also check into this discrepancy and report back. Brief discussion ensued regarding the Winnepesaukee River Basin project. Doug Lambert moved to approve \$852,353 under Sewer. Phyllis Corrigan seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 11-1.

Margo Weeks moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2009 Budget Committee meeting. Phyllis Corrigan seconded. Terry Stewart abstained. Motion carried with all in favor.

Margo Weeks moved to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Sue Greene seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey
Executive Secretary