

**GILFORD BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**November 12, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Town Hall**

Members Present: John O'Brien, Sue Greene, Dick Hickok, Kurt Webber, Dale Dormody, Phyllis Corrigan, Fred Butler, Mark Corry and Terry Stewart

Members Absent: Kevin Roy, Skip Murphy and Doug Lambert

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Scott Dunn, Finance Director Geoff Ruggles and Executive Secretary Sandra Bailey.

In the audience were Fire Chief Jim Hayes, Deputy Fire Chief John Beland and Fire Engineer Bill Akerley.

The Budget Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hickok welcomed the Committee to this evening's meeting and advised them that he would like to bring up the School District's Sub-committee assignments later in the meeting. Dale Dormody began a review of the Fire Department's budget. Also on this Sub-committee were Dick Hickok and Mark Corry.

Dale Dormody began his presentation by stating that the overall budget has increased by 9.5%, which is primarily driven by wages, retirement and two significant capital expenditures that are planned for the coming year. Full-time wages are up 3.9% and part-time wages are up 12.2% over last year. The part-time wages (32 hours per week) represent the Fire Inspector and 2010 will be the first year that the position is budgeted for a full year. The position was funded at 20 hours for midway through 2009.

Chairman Hickok added that the increase in hours for the Fire Inspector was explained to be justified by the public, primarily contractors, who needed him to have greater availability. Deputy Chief Beland pointed out that \$9,442 has been received as of this date in revenue for fees and this amount covers the pay increase from 20 hours to 32 hours per week. Discussion ensued regarding Fire Department permit fees.

Next, discussion ensued regarding pro-rated benefits for the Fire Inspector, in accordance with the 1/1/09 Personnel Policy. However, Finance Director Ruggles advised the Committee that the Fire Inspector is not participating in the Town's health insurance plan. Sue Greene stated that she was concerned with adding this full-time position and it was clarified that it was an existing position that was going from 20 hours part-time to 32 hours part-time.

Dale Dormody continued with his presentation with the Overtime line item. This has increased 4.4% over 2009 and several changes have been made within the Fire Department to help manage the overtime account. Deputy Chief Beland pointed out that the firefighters approached the Administration with recommendations on reducing overtime.

Under Professional Development, Dale Dormody pointed out that the amount in this line item needs to be swapped with the amount shown under Software Licensing. He further stated that the Professional Development expense covers mandated skilled courses required to keep certifications current. The Equipment Maintenance line is up 36.1% because the copier service

contract was previously charged to another area of the budget. This also includes the cost of independent testing of fire hoses to ensure compliance with NFPA standards.

Ambulance supplies have increased by 56% because LRGH had previously re-stocked ambulance supplies at no cost to the Town. This practice has been discontinued and the Town must now purchase the supplies.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the issue of the Town of Belmont contracting with a private ambulance service. The pros and cons of this sort of arrangement were discussed, as well as the utilization of Capital Reserve Funds for purchasing ambulances and other fire vehicles. Fire Engineer Bill Akerley pointed out that with a private ambulance service, it is a "for profit" business and billing is a priority over patient care.

The Committee also discussed the fact that members of the Fire Department would still be needed to perform various other services at a fire or medical incident. In addition, questions were asked and answered regarding the postage account, vehicle maintenance and physical examinations.

The next portion of the budget to be reviewed was under Special Projects. \$4,000 has been earmarked for the cost of 10 additional personal escape systems for 10 call company members who do not have the apparatus. Deputy Chief Beland explained how the personal escape systems work and emphasized that they help maintain a high level of safety for firefighters.

Under Capital Expenditures, the Capital Vehicles cost of \$85,000 is earmarked for the 1992 Rescue Vehicle. Refurbishing this vehicle will allow for easier access to the "jaws of life" equipment, upgrade the onboard generator and repair areas with corrosion. This rescue vehicle will be out of service for approximately three months. Deputy Chief Beland stated that during that period, the equipment on the rescue vehicle would be placed on other vehicles temporarily. Additional discussion focused on other possible alternatives than the refurbishment.

Under Capital Equipment, \$56,313 is budgeted for the 2010 budget, the first of three annual lease-to-own payments for self-contained breathing apparatus. Deputy Chief Beland provided an extensive explanation of problems that have occurred with the existing gear. He also explained that when the new apparatus is purchased it is fit tested at no charge and then an annual fee will be incurred to inspect the equipment. All training is part of the purchasing contract.

Dale Dormody moved to approve \$1,797,448 for the Fire Department Budget. Mark Corry seconded. Terry Stewart commended the Board of Selectmen for the reductions they made in this budget prior to its review by the Budget Committee. Dale Dormody pointed out that the reduction is primarily due to the elimination of \$50,000 to the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund. The vote on the motion indicated 8-yes and 1-no. Motion carried.

The last portion of the Fire Department budget to be reviewed was Emergency Management, Fire Protection and Forestry. The Emergency Management Director receives a \$3,400 stipend, keeping it in line with the stipend received by the Health Officer. Fire Protection is for hydrant water received from the Laconia Water Works. The largest portion of the Forestry section is for part-time wages and benefits. Terry Stewart asked Chief Hayes to outline the duties of the Emergency Management Director. Chief Hayes responded that more responsibility has been funneled to EM Directors since 9/11. He must ensure that all Town departments and School

personnel receive the minimum training required for NIMS. Depending on the position, there are various levels of training that are required. He pointed out that the Board of Selectmen is required to take four (4) hours of training per year. In addition, the Emergency Management Director attends many meetings and is responsible for incidents that occur as a result of natural disasters, wildfires or when evacuation is required.

Dale Dormody moved to approve a total of \$58,362 under Emergency Management, Fire Protection and Forestry. Terry Stewart seconded. Motion carried by a vote of 9-0.

Chairman Hickok then brought up the matter of School budget sub-committees. The five categories in the review of the School District budget are District-wide expenses, such as administration, building maintenance and technology; Gilford Elementary School; Gilford Middle School; Gilford High School; and Special Education. Assignments made included Terry Stewart for District-wide expenses, Phyllis Corrigan and Dale Dormody for Gilford Elementary School, Dale Dormody for Middle School, Terry Stewart and Mark Corry for High School, and Mark Corry, Sue Greene, Phyllis Corrigan and Fred Butler for Special Education. Assignments for absent Committee members will be completed at the next meeting on November 19, 2009.

Chairman Hickok reported that the School District's budget materials will be ready on Tuesday, November 24, 2009.

Brief discussion ensued regarding having Belknap County Convention representative Alida Millham attend a Budget Committee meeting. Chairman Hickok spoke with her and she feels that it would be better to wait until at least December for a briefing.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the need for a petitioned warrant article for the School District's warrant, requiring that all Budget items indicate the vote of the Board of Selectmen/School Board and Budget Committee.

Terry Stewart moved to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2009 Budget Committee meeting, correcting the name of the Deputy Police Chief from John Markland to Kevin Keenan. Dale Dormody seconded. Kurt Webber abstained. Motion carried with all in favor.

Kurt Webber moved to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. Fred Butler seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bailey  
Executive Secretary